CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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RCB retain IPL crown as Kohli powers Bengaluru to second title

AHMEDABAD

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) successfully defended their Indian Premier League title, defeating Gujarat Titans by five wickets in the IPL 2026 final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Sunday.

Chasing a modest target of 156, RCB rode on a masterful unbeaten 75 from Virat Kohli, who anchored the innings despite battling cramps during the latter stages of the chase. Kohli's innings came off just 42 balls and included his fastest IPL half-century, ensuring Bengaluru crossed the finish line with two overs to spare.

Earlier, RCB skipper Rajat Patidar won the toss and elected to bowl. The decision paid rich dividends as the Bengaluru bowlers kept Gujarat Titans under constant pressure. Washington Sundar emerged as the lone bright spot for GT with a fighting half-century, helping his side reach 155 for eight in 20 overs.

Bengaluru sealed back-to-back titles, capping a remarkable IPL campaign

RCB's pace attack, led by Rasikh Salam Dar, dismantled the Titans' top order. Gujarat's star batting trio of Shubman Gill, Sai Sudharsan and Jos Buttler failed to make significant contributions in the summit clash.

The chase began aggressively with Venkatesh Iyer providing a brisk start before Kohli took complete control. Despite losing wickets at regular intervals, Bengaluru maintained momentum through crucial partnerships involving Tim David, Rajat Patidar and Jitesh Sharma.

The defining moment came in the 18th over when Kohli launched Arshad Khan for a towering six over long-on to seal victory and spark celebrations among thousands of RCB supporters.

With the win, RCB became only the second team in IPL history to successfully defend their title.

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE STANDINGS

TEAM	M	W	L	Pts	NRR
Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB)	14	9	5	18	+0.783
Gujarat Titans (GT)	14	9	5	18	+0.695
Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH)	14	9	5	18	+0.524
Rajasthan Royals (RR)	14	8	6	16	+0.189
Punjab Kings (PBKS)	14	7	6	15	+0.309
Delhi Capitals (DC)	14	7	7	14	-0.651
Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR)	14	6	7	13	-0.147
Chennai Super Kings (CSK)	14	6	8	12	-0.345
Mumbai Indians (MI)	14	4	10	8	-0.584
Lucknow Super Giants (LSG)	14	4	10	8	-0.740

Mysuru plans yoga sessions at 120 venues on Int'l Yoga Day

MYSURU

Mysuru is preparing for a massive celebration of International Yoga Day on June 21, with yoga organisations planning sessions at 120 locations across the city and targeting participation from 1.2 lakh people.

The announcement was made during the Mahasankalp Diwas programme organised by the Mysuru Yoga Federation at the Mysuru Palace premises on Sunday as a prelude to the global event.

Addressing participants, Mysuru Yoga Federation's Srihari Dwarkanath said the federation aims to involve 1,200 yoga trainers who will guide participants across 120 venues. He expressed confidence of achieving the target with the support of numerous yoga schools and institutions in the city.

Srihari noted that the upcoming edition marks the 12th International Yoga Day and said the federation had chosen 120 venues.

PM urges caution amid heatwave, celebrates athletes & mango heritage

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged citizens to take precautions against the ongoing heatwave, stressing the importance of staying hydrated and following government advisories during extreme summer conditions.

Speaking during the latest edition of his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, Modi advised people to avoid unnecessary exposure to the sun and take adequate safety measures while outdoors.

"With temperatures soaring across much of the country, it is important to take extra care. Stay hydrated.

If you need to step out in the sun, do so cautiously and take necessary precautions," he said.

Apart from discussing the heatwave, Modi highlighted India's rich mango diversity, describing the fruit as an integral part of the country's summer culture. He mentioned popular varieties including Alphonso, Kesar, Dussehri, Langra, Banganapalli, Totapuri and Himsagar, noting that Indian mangoes are increasingly finding global markets.

> "With temperatures soaring across much of the country, it is important to take extra care. Stay hydrated."
> Narendra Modi, PM

The Prime Minister also praised Indian athletes for their recent achievements at the National Senior Athletics Federation Competition in Ranchi.

MANN KI BAAT HIGHLIGHTS

TOPIC	KEY MESSAGE
Heatwave	Stay hydrated and avoid excessive sun exposure
Public Advisory	Follow government-issued safety guidelines
Summer Special	Celebrated India's diverse mango varieties
Sports Focus	Praised national athletics achievements

Karnataka ministry talks on, but no formal proposal received: Mallikarjun Kharge

Congress leadership awaits formal Cabinet proposal as Karnataka govt formation continues

NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday said the party high command has not yet received any proposal regarding the composition of the new Karnataka Cabinet under Chief Minister-designate D K Shivakumar, indicating that key decisions on ministerial appointments will be taken only after the swearing-in ceremony scheduled for June 3.

Speaking to reporters in New Delhi, Kharge said discussions on government formation were continuing, but no formal recommendations had reached the party leadership regarding the number of ministers, deputy chief ministers or appointments to key boards and corporations.

"We will have to see. No proposal has come yet. Once it comes, discussions will be held on how many ministers and deputy chief ministers should be appointed and whether important chairmanships should also be filled at the same time," Kharge said.

The Congress chief stressed that greater clarity on the ministry's structure would emerge only after Shivakumar formally assumes office. He also hinted that the Cabinet could be expanded in phases, with an initial set of ministers sworn in first and remaining vacancies filled later.

At a Glance

- Congress high command awaiting formal Cabinet proposal.
- Number of ministers yet to be decided.
- Possibility of phased Cabinet expansion.
- Deputy CM appointments remain undecided.
- Search underway for a new KPCC president.
- Final decisions likely after June 3 swearing-in.

"Whether he appoints eight or ten ministers, we have not received any proposal. Once it comes, one phase may be completed first and the remaining positions could be filled after 15 days or a month," he added.

Responding to questions on accommodating party aspirants, Kharge said discussions were underway but no final framework had been communicated. He acknowledged suggestions that some leaders could be accommodated in a second round of appointments.

> "All these matters are under discussion. We will know after June 3. Right now, we have to wait."
> — Mallikarjun Kharge, AICC President

Kharge also confirmed that the party was searching for a new president of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee after Shivakumar takes over as chief minister.

"We need a leader who can work very fast and bring everyone together collectively," he said.

KEY ISSUE	STATUS
CM-designate	D K Shivakumar
Swearing-in	June 3
Cabinet proposal	Not submitted yet
Deputy CM decision	Pending
First phase ministers	Under discussion
KPCC chief selection	In progress
Cabinet expansion	May happen in phases

Congress Bhavan foundation ceremony likely after CM swearing-in

BENGALURU: The Congress is planning to hold the foundation stone-laying ceremony for its proposed new state headquarters near Race Course Road on June 3, immediately after the swearing-in of Chief Minister-designate D.K. Shivakumar. According to Shivakumar, the schedules of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leader Rahul Gandhi are yet to be finalised, and their confirmation will determine the final programme.

The event is expected to bring together block and district Congress presidents, legislators, former legislators, MPs and office-bearers of various party wings. Due to space limitations at the site, attendance will be restricted to invited guests. Shivakumar appealed to party workers to cooperate, saying it would not be possible to accommodate large crowds. Preparations for the ceremony are being coordinated under the leadership of senior Congress leader Ramalinga Reddy. The proposed Congress Bhavan is expected to serve as the party's key organisational and administrative centre in Karnataka.

SC judges inaugurate skill, mental health initiatives at Central Prison

BENGALURU

A high-level judicial delegation led by Supreme Court Judge Justice Vikram Nath visited the Central Prison at Parappana Agrahara on Sunday and inaugurated new initiatives aimed at improving inmate rehabilitation, skill development and mental healthcare.

The delegation included Justice Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court and Patron-in-Chief of the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, and Justice Anu Sivaraman, Executive Chairperson of the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority.

During the visit, the dignitaries inspected the prison's Legal Services Centre and reviewed welfare measures being implemented for inmates. A key highlight of the visit was the inauguration of a computer laboratory sponsored by R.V. College of Engineering, Bengaluru.

The facility has been launched under the theme "Cells to Skills", an initiative designed to equip prisoners with digital literacy and vocational skills.The delegation also visited the prison hospital and reviewed the functioning of the De-Addiction Centre established within the prison premises. In the women's prison section, the dignitaries inaugurated a Tele-MANAS facility. The programme was presided over by Alok Kumar, IPS, Director General of Police, Prisons and Correctional Services, Karnataka.

Key initiatives launched

- "Cells to Skills" Computer Lab inaugurated for inmate training.
- Tele-MANAS Centre launched for mental health support.
- Review of De-Addiction Centre and prison healthcare services.
- Inspection of Legal Services Centre inside prison.
- Visit to women inmates' Crèche and childcare facilities.
- Interaction with legal aid beneficiaries and prison officials.

India, US begin crucial four-day trade talks today

NEW DELHI

India and the United States will begin a crucial four-day round of trade negotiations in New Delhi today, with chief negotiators from both sides aiming to finalise the details of an interim trade agreement and advance discussions on a broader bilateral trade pact.

The US delegation will be led by chief negotiator Brendan Lynch, while India's team will be headed by Darpan Jain.

According to the Commerce Ministry, the discussions will focus on market access, non-tariff barriers,

customs and trade facilitation, investment promotion and economic security cooperation. The talks follow the framework agreed upon by the two countries in February for the first phase of a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA).

The meeting assumes significance as both countries seek to recalibrate the proposed pact following changes in the US tariff regime. Earlier plans for tariff reductions and expanded market access were impacted by policy changes and legal developments in the United States.

Officials are also expected to discuss issues arising from ongoing US trade investigations and ways to enhance bilateral commerce. The negotiations come at a time when the US remains one of India's largest trading partners.

In 2025-26, India's exports to the US stood at $87.3 billion, while imports were valued at $52.9 billion, leaving India with a trade surplus of $34.4 billion.

NH44 FATAL CRASH

Six labourers killed in NH-44 truck-auto crash

BAGEPALLI

Six daily wage labourers were killed in a horrific road accident after a container truck rammed into an autorickshaw near Bagepalli in Karnataka's Chikkaballapur district on Sunday.

The accident occurred near the Gangotri petrol station on National Highway 44, one of the busiest road corridors connecting Karnataka with neighbouring states. According to police, the victims were travelling in an autorickshaw

and were returning home after work when the speeding container vehicle crashed into them.

The impact of the collision was devastating, leaving the autorickshaw mangled beyond recognition. All six occupants suffered fatal injuries and died on the spot before emergency services could provide assistance.

Police personnel and rescue teams rushed to the scene and cleared the wreckage, while traffic movement on the highway was temporarily disrupted. The bodies were shifted for postmortem examinations.

Authorities said the identities of some of the deceased were yet to be formally established and efforts were underway to inform their families. A case has been registered and an investigation launched to determine the exact cause of the accident.

Preliminary findings suggest overspeeding or driver negligence may have played a role, though officials said the final conclusion would emerge only after a detailed probe.

The tragedy has triggered concern among local residents, who have repeatedly flagged safety issues and frequent accidents along stretches of NH-44.

QUICK READ

Road rage ends in brutal stabbing

BENGALURU

A trivial traffic dispute in Bengaluru turned bloody when a 17-year-old college student was brutally stabbed by a group of miscreants in the middle of the road. The victim, a part-time bike taxi driver, was targeted after a minor argument over giving way to another rider. Two men blocked his vehicle and later returned with a third accomplice, dragging the teen aside and repeatedly stabbing him in the chest and neck. The student is currently fighting for his life in the ICU. Police have registered an attempt-to-murder case and are using CCTV footage to hunt the suspects.

Bengaluru launches challenge to reduce city traffic

BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has introduced an inspiring '1 Km Challenge' to encourage local citizens to walk short distances instead of using motorized vehicles. The eco-friendly campaign aims to significantly reduce traffic congestion, lower rising air pollution, and promote a healthier lifestyle. The GBA is urging residents to skip booking auto-rickshaws for any trips under one kilometer, prompting them to choose a quick ten-minute walk instead. Officials believe these small behavioral shifts will make Bengaluru pedestrian-friendly. Residents are also encouraged to nominate friends and family to join this clean, green initiative.

14 new ministers to take oath soon: Reports

BENGALURU

A high-stakes political puzzle is unfolding in Karnataka as Congress gets ready for the official cabinet swearing-in ceremony. Newly elected Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar will take his oath of office on May 3, reportedly accompanied by fourteen ministers.Balancing local caste equations and regional representation has become a massive headache for the Congress party's central leadership in Delhi. To satisfy various communities, internal discussions are currently underway to create four separate Deputy Chief Minister positions. This unique strategy aims to maintain absolute equality across different community groups and geographic regions, which remains the biggest challenge for the high command.The race for these deputy positions has triggered intense lobbying within the party ranks. Prominent leaders like Yathindra, M.B. Patil, Zameer Ahmed Khan, U.T. Khader, Dr. G. Parameshwar, and Priyank Kharge are all actively competing to secure a DCM title.

Santosh Kumar appointed as Karnataka Child Rights Chief

The Karnataka government appointed Santosh Kumar as Chairman of the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights for three years.

BENGALURU

The Karnataka state government has officially appointed Santosh Kumar as the new Chairman of the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights. This major leadership change aims to strengthen the protection and welfare of children across the region over the coming years.

According to a formal statement released by the Department of Women and Child Development and Empowerment of the Disabled and Senior Citizens, Santosh Kumar, who hails from Adarsh Nagar, will serve a three-year term. His official leadership role took effect on May 27, giving him the immediate responsibility of overseeing the state's various child safety initiatives, legal protections, and welfare programs.

In addition to naming the new chairman, the state government announced the appointment of three new committee members to support the commission's vital work. The newly appointed members are Satyanarayana Shetty, Jagannath Halamadagi, and Venkatesh. They have also been chosen to serve a three-year term, and their roles take effect immediately.

Together, this newly formed leadership team will guide the state commission in investigating rights violations, improving school safety standards, and ensuring proper care for vulnerable children. Local child welfare advocates have welcomed the official appointments, expressing hope that the fresh leadership will bring faster solutions to ongoing challenges faced by children in the state. The team is expected to begin their regular review meetings this week to plan their safety goals for the upcoming year.

Oncologists flag rising cancer among Bengaluru youth

BENGALURU

Senior oncologists in Bengaluru have raised a serious red flag regarding a sharp spike in cancer cases among the city's younger population. Doctors warn that an early addiction to smoking and tobacco is severely damaging the health of local teenagers and young adults.

Medical experts emphasize that tobacco use is no longer just a threat to the lungs. It is aggressively targeting multiple vital organs, resulting in an increase of stomach, liver, kidney, pancreatic, and blood cancers. In Bengaluru particularly, tongue and mouth cancers have recorded a dramatic rise among men.

Shia leaders demand Council seat for Aga Sultan Murtuza

BENGALURU

Shia Muslim leaders and community supporters have launched a formal demand urging the Congress party to nominate well-known educationist and politician Aga Sultan Murtuza for a seat in the Karnataka Legislative Council. The demand arises ahead of the state council elections scheduled for June 18.

Supporters point out that seven council seats will soon become vacant, with Congress expected to win at least four of them. Leaders argue that the Shia Muslim community has been politically neglected for too long and deserves fair representation this time. Sultan has been a loyal supporter of the Congress party since the 1980s, currently serving as a general secretary and spokesperson for the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee.

Beyond politics, Sultan is famous for sparking an educational revolution in Bengaluru by founding the Unity Education Society, high schools, and colleges. His extensive academic leadership includes serving multiple terms on the syndicate boards of both Bangalore University and Visvesvaraya Technological University. Former state governors and chief ministers have previously praised his administrative work.

Furthermore, Sultan is recognized globally for organizing "Hussein Day," an annual international event dedicated to spreading the messages of communal harmony and brotherhood. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he actively coordinated local health relief programs. His family-run charity organization, "Who is Hussain," also provides regular medical and educational funding to poor households. Community members stress that awarding Sultan a legislative seat would honor his forty years of public service while giving a voice to a minority community.

Shia Muslim leaders are urging the Congress party to nominate educationist Aga Sultan Murtuza for the Karnataka Legislative Council elections to ensure minority community representation.

IISc detects hazardous Uranium in Bengaluru lakes

BENGALURU

A shocking scientific study has revealed that Bengaluru's lakes are facing a major ecological disaster. Following recent incidents where thousands of dead fish mysteriously floated to the surface of the city's water bodies, researchers have discovered dangerous levels of toxic uranium in the water.

Experts from the prestigious Indian Institute of Science (IISc) collected and tested water samples from nine prominent local lakes. The highly anticipated scientific report confirmed that almost all tested water bodies are severely polluted. Alarmingly, scientists detected the presence of the hazardous heavy metal uranium, which poses an immediate, severe threat to public health.

The IISc team inspected key water bodies including Jakkur, Yelahanka, Lakshmipura, Ramasandra, Hesarghatta, Ulsoor, Madiwala, Varthur, and Ghattahalli. The findings indicate that Varthur lake is currently the most polluted among them. Investigators identified the direct dumping of untreated industrial chemical waste and domestic household sewage into the lakes as the primary cause behind this environmental crisis.

This toxic pollution is no longer confined to the surface.

Storms destroy nearly thousand Bengaluru trees

BENGALURU

Severe thunderstorms and heavy rainfall have severely impacted Bengaluru's famous green cover. According to official data from the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), the city lost a staggering 949 trees and 2,066 large tree branches to violent weather over the past month.

The environmental damage was recorded between April 29 and May 29. The Bengaluru West City Corporation limits bore the maximum brunt of nature's fury, reporting the highest destruction with 330 fallen trees and 919 broken branches. While civic teams have successfully cleared almost all fallen trunks from major roadsides, piles of green debris and broken branches still clog several neighborhood streets and footpaths.

GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao had strictly directed civic officials to swiftly clear up the remaining green waste to ensure public safety and smooth traffic flow. However, local residents complain that cleanup efforts have not yielded the desired results on the ground. Frustrated citizens stated that emergency helpline numbers shared by the forest department and the municipal control room often go completely unanswered.

Currently, the challenging task of cutting and transporting the massive volume of felled wood is underway. To address lingering blockages, the West Corporation has urged proactive residents to report any overlooked debris on footpaths or public spaces. Citizens can contact the central helpline at 1533, dial the dedicated West Corporation control room at 9480685703, or reach out directly to the designated forest department officials to help restore the city's streets.

Schools reopen with festive local celebrations

BENGALURU

Summer vacations have officially ended for school students across Bengaluru as classes for the new 2026-27 academic year resume from June 1. To ensure children return to classrooms with excitement, the Education Department has ordered all schools to be decorated beautifully with festive garlands. In a warm gesture to welcome students back, schools have also been instructed to prepare delicious traditional sweets for the midday meal. This joyful, celebratory approach aims to reduce back-to-school anxiety and create a positive, welcoming environment for the thousands of young minds returning to their studies.

Former minister K.H. Muniyappa stated that the Congress high command will decide on a cabinet position for his daughter.

Muniyappa leaves daughter's cabinet post decision to Congress

BENGALURU

Former minister K.H. Muniyappa clarified that the ultimate decision regarding a potential cabinet position for his daughter, MLA Roopa Shashidhar, rests entirely with the Congress party high command.

According to reports, Muniyappa addressed the widespread speculation surrounding his daughter's political advancement. "I have worked at the Center for 30 years, and I have no differences. We will abide by whatever decision

the high command takes," he stated, reinforcing his absolute loyalty to the party's central leadership.

The veteran leader also took the opportunity to praise outgoing Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for his leadership style over the past few years. Muniyappa expressed his immense gratitude to Siddaramaiah, thanking him for managing state affairs and guiding the government so calmly during his tenure.

Looking forward to the transition of power on June 3, Muniyappa remained confident that the administrative shift would go smoothly. He concluded by stating that the party remains united and well-positioned to secure another victory in the 2028 state assembly elections.

SIX VEHICLES SEIZED FOR ILLEGAL WASTE DUMPING

BENGALURU

The Bengaluru East City Corporation has launched a major crackdown on illegal waste disposal, seizing six vehicles and filing an official police complaint against a local waste-dumping racket. The strict action took place under the Kadugodi police station limits within the Mahadevapura zone.

Municipal Commissioner D.S. Ramesh stated that the enforcement drive was launched following heavy complaints from local residents. Citizens noticed massive amounts of commercial bulk waste being dumped unlawfully on vacant land near Siddhartha Layout, right next to the South Pinakini River.

According to civic officials, a private company named Eco Sphere Waste Solutions was originally authorized to collect and properly dispose of bulk waste from local commercial and residential complexes. However, a group led by an individual named Naushad allegedly created fake identity cards using the company's name. They used these forged cards to collect trash illegally and dump it in unauthorized open spaces.

Acting on public tips, civic officials kept the area under strict surveillance. During a special operation, authorities intercepted five trash-filled trucks at the dumping site, though the drivers managed to escape. A sixth vehicle was caught and seized the following day.

THE DCM RACE

Karnataka Congress leaders lobby for DCM post

BENGALURU

A fierce political battle has erupted within the ruling Karnataka Congress party. Following the election of the new Chief Minister, top leaders are now aggressively lobbying for the Deputy Chief Minister post and key ministerial positions.

The biggest fight is happening for the DCM seat under the Dalit quota. Senior leader Dr. G. Parameshwar and young leader Priyank Kharge are both racing for this powerful role. Parameshwar recently traveled to Delhi to pressure the party's high command. He has reportedly threatened to remain a simple lawmaker if he is not given a major portfolio alongside the DCM title, openly rejecting the Home Department post offered previously. Meanwhile, Priyank Kharge's rising popularity has added immense drama to this political race.

At the same time, a massive scramble for cabinet seats has begun. Former ministers want their old jobs back, while senior leaders who missed out earlier are demanding their fair share. Even newly elected lawmakers are pushing hard to join the new cabinet.

To resolve the growing tension, outgoing leader Siddaramaiah has forwarded a secret shortlist of recommended names to the party high command in Delhi. Reliable sources reveal that this list includes prominent figures like A.S. Ponnanna, Shivaraj Thangadgi, Puttaranga Shetty, K. Venkatesh, Basavaraj Rayareddy, B.K. Hariprasad, Santosh Lad, H.C. Mahadevappa, and Zameer Ahmed Khan.

Party chief Mallikarjun Kharge stated that final decisions regarding the exact number of ministers will be made soon, but local lobbying shows absolutely no signs of slowing down.

Korean expats make Bengaluru their new home

BENGALURU

Over one thousand Korean expatriates have successfully made Bengaluru their new home. Mainly employed by major global giants like Kia, Samsung, and LG, these families have predominantly settled across northern neighborhoods, drawn by robust community networks, international schools, and gated societies.

While adjusting to a distinct lifestyle, many expats recall humorous cultural shocks. Seo Kyong-nam, an educational director who arrived twenty years ago, smiled remembering how she learned that a shopkeeper's "tomorrow" actually meant the near future. She also found the casual warmth of local children surprisingly affectionate compared to Korea's strict age seniority customs.

Language remains a primary hurdles for arriving children. Since Korean schools prioritize reading over speaking, families utilize specialized international school programs and academies like Indoin in Sahakarnagar to boost English conversational fluency.

QUICK READ

Bengaluru's huge plastic seizure exposes major gaps

CH NEWS, BENGALURU Bengaluru has collected a record 2.2 crore in fines over the past year for illegal single-use plastic. Authorities seized 77,000 kilograms of banned items across 42,000 cases between June 2025 and May 2026. This marks the highest penalty collection in four years since the national ban was enforced. Despite these strict drives, activists warn that illegal plastic bags and cups are flooding streets again as manufacturing continues at night. Experts emphasize that civic fines alone cannot solve the problem. They argue that authorities must shut down illegal factories permanently to stop plastic waste at its source.

NFHS-6 reveals sharp gender gap in sterilization

CH NEWS, BENGALURU Newly released data from the National Family Health Survey-6 reveals that the burden of family planning still falls almost entirely on women. According to the report, 56.9% of women undergo sterilization compared to 0% of men. Experts blame deep-rooted cultural beliefs and widespread myths that vasectomies cause impotence or reduce strength. Ironically, female sterilization is far more invasive, requiring up to two weeks of recovery and carrying higher risks. In contrast, a modern vasectomy takes under 30 minutes. Overall, the study also highlighted a general decline in contraceptive use across India.

Probe demanded into massive Bengaluru garbage tender

CH NEWS, Bengaluru Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje has demanded a high-level investigation into a 39,437 crore solid waste management tender issued by the Greater Bengaluru Authority. In a letter to Karnataka's Chief Secretary, Karandlaje alleged massive corruption and procedural violations in awarding contracts for the city's North and South trash packages. She claimed that project costs were artificially inflated after a consulting firm was illegally chan ged. Furthermore, she noted that previously disqualified bidders were mysteriously qualified in later rounds. Karandlaje has urged officials to halt the tender immediately to prevent public funds from being misused.

Shivakumar set to become India's wealthiest CM

D.K. Shivakumar is set to become India's wealthiest Chief Minister, boasting declared assets worth 1,413 crore rupees

BENGALURU

Karnataka's incoming leader, D.K. Shivakumar, is poised to become the wealthiest Chief Minister in India. According to a detailed financial analysis of election affidavits compiled by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), his total declared assets stand at an astounding Rs 1,413 crore.

This financial milestone places Shivakumar comfortably ahead of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, who holds Rs 931 crore, and Tamil Nadu Chief

Minister C. Joseph Vijay, with Rs 648 crore. Notably, India's three wealthiest Chief Ministers all hail from southern states.

Unlike many politicians who publicly project an austere lifestyle through simple clothing, Shivakumar openly embraces his immense wealth. His personal wardrobe features prominent international luxury brands like Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Prada, Burberry, and Gucci. He frequently pairs these outfits with premium watches from Rolex and Cartier, and wears custom-tailored shirts and kurtas subtly embroidered with his signature "dk" monogram.

Shivakumar's vast wealth includes Rs 1,140 crore in immovable property and Rs 273 crore in movable assets, balanced against liabilities of Rs 265 crore. He has previously stated that his wealth is declared transparently under his family's name, unlike others who use hidden companies.

His wealth has grown exponentially from Rs 75.5 crore in 2008 due to strategic investments and inheritance. He owns vast agricultural land alongside premium residential properties scattered across Bengaluru, Mysuru, Kanakapura, and Delhi. This massive accumulation places him among the wealthiest elected public representatives nationwide.

Age debate sparks tension in Congress cabinet

BENGALURU

An intense internal debate regarding age limits and political succession planning has erupted within the Congress party over the formation of Chief Minister-designate D.K. Shivakumar's upcoming cabinet. The fierce discussion has left veteran politicians deeply anxious, while younger lawmakers push hard for greater government representation.

At the heart of the conflict is whether Shivakumar will introduce a massive generational shift or continue relying on the senior leaders who dominated the previous administration. The Congress high command in Delhi is reportedly advocating for a balanced, Kerala-style governance model that purposefully blends youthful energy with

An age-limit debate in the Karnataka Congress over D.K. Shivakumar's new cabinet has sparked tension between anxious veteran politicians and younger lawmakers seeking representation.

veteran experience to nurture future second-line leaders.

Under the outgoing administration, the average age of state ministers stood exceptionally high at around 64 to 65 years. Out of 34 total ministers, 21 individuals were well over the age of 60, including nine prominent veterans sitting in the 70-to-80 age bracket. Adopting the central leadership's younger benchmark would mean dropping nearly 13 senior ministers aged between 70 and 81 years to make room for lawmakers in their forties and fifties.

However, panicked senior politicians argue that Karnataka's complex political landscape depends heavily on regional strongmen and traditional caste equations rather than Kerala's cadre-driven system. Conversely, younger party functionaries warn that without empowering fresh faces now, the party will face a massive leadership crisis within the next decade, especially since rival parties are already actively promoting younger leaders across India.

The Congress central leadership assured that outgoing Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will remain active to help win the 2029 elections.

Siddaramaiah urged to help Rahul become PM

BENGALURU

The Congress party central leadership has made it clear that outgoing Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's political career is far from over. During a Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting at Vidhana Soudha, the high command sent a strong message that the veteran leader will continue to play a pivotal role.

At the meeting, where D.K. Shivakumar was officially chosen as the next Chief Minister, AICC General Secretary K.C. Venugopal reassured anxious supporters of the 77-year-old veteran. He stated

that the party has no intentions of letting Siddaramaiah retire from active politics. Instead, his immense experience will be heavily utilized at both the state and national levels.

Addressing the gathered lawmakers, Venugopal highly praised Siddaramaiah's governi ng contributions. He directly told the veteran leader that the party needs his services to bui ld a strong team for the 2029 national elections, specifically to help make Rahul Gandhi the next Prime Minister of India.According to attendees, an emotional Siddaramaiah reflected deeply on his tenure. He highlig hted his successful implementation of public welfare guarantee schemes and noted how his administration prudently managed the state's financial burdens despite receiving poor financial support from the central government. The CLP subsequently pas sed a formal resolution thanking Siddaramaiah for his leader ship from 2013 to 2018 and 2023 to 2026.

Yellow alert issued for Bengaluru city

BENGALURU

The Meteorological Department has issued an urgent weather warning for Bengaluru, forecasting heavy downpours accompanied by severe thunder and lightning. The emergency weather service has declared a yellow alert for Bengaluru City, Bengaluru Rural, and neighboring Kolar districts, with intense rain expected to strike within the next three hour s.This sudden weather warning follows a pattern of turbulent climate conditions in the region.

FOUR-HOUR FAST TRACK

SWR approves faster B'luru-Vijayapura spl train

BENGALURU

South Western Railway has officially approved a new biweekly express special train between Bengaluru and Vijayapura. This newly introduced overnight service will complete its journey in just eleven hours, making it significantly faster than any other existing trains running along this busy route.

Passengers traveling between these two cities had long demanded a fast, overnight train for better convenience. The launch

follows the successful completion of a crucial 9.6-kilometer track doubling project between Alamatti and Wandal, which was commissioned two months ago. While other older trains on this route take nearly fifteen hours, this special express cuts travel time by four hours by strategically bypassing the busy Hubballi and Gadag stations.

According to the official timetable, the express special will depart from Yeshwantpur at 6:15 PM on Saturdays and Mondays, arriving in Vijayapura by 5:15 AM the next day. The return service will leave Vijayapura at 5:00 PM on Sundays and Tuesdays, reaching Yeshwantpur by 4:10 AM the following morning.

The 19-coach train will stop at several key stations, including Tumakuru, Arsikere, Davanagere, Haveri, Gadag Bypass, Badami, Bagalkot, Alamatti, and Basavana Bagewadi. The new service from Yeshwantpur will officially begin on June 1, benefiting thousands of commuters traveling for education, healthcare, and business. Meanwhile, Large Industries Minister M.B. Patil has urged the railway ministry to adjust the timings further to an 8:00 PM departure for maximum passenger comfort.

Bengaluru Metro Pink Line delayed until 2027

BENGALURU

Commuters awaiting the launch of Bengaluru Metro's highly anticipated Pink Line will have to wait longer. While the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is rushing to open the city's longest underground section by December, remaining construction and pending safety approvals have pushed the launch to early 2027.

The 21-kilometer Pink Line corridor connects Kalena Agrahara to Nagawara, featuring a massive 13.76-kilometer underground tunnel stretch between Dairy Circle and Nagawara. BMRCL has already started trial runs on the 7.5-kilometer elevated section from Kalena Agrahara to Tavarekere, aiming for a public launch within two months. However, the underground section will not meet the same swift timeline.

Interestingly, the Pink Line has received four train sets from BEML, but faces structural delays. Around five to ten percent of civil work remains unfinished, particularly between Tannery Road and Venkateshpura Road stations. Overall tra ck installation has reached 92.55 percent completion, and teams are currently insta lling electrical systems alon gside advanced Platform Scr een Doors at underground sta tions. The most significant bottleneck involves securing mandatory clearances from the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RD SO) and the Commissio ner of Metro Railway Safety (CMRS). Before inviting inspectors, BMRCL must conduct extensive trial runs and submit independent safety reports.

City tree census faces extensive counting delays

BENGALURU

Bengaluru's official tree census remains incomplete and continues to face extensive delays more than two years after the initiative originally launched in 2024. According to the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), sluggish tracking across certain municipal zones means the on-ground audit will take at least two more months to wrap up.

Sudarshan GK, the GBA's Deputy Conservator of Forests, confirmed that contractors require extra time to complete the remaining field enumeration. The High Court initially ordered the green inventory back in 2019, but execution was delayed by five years. Since starting in February 2024, the project has repeatedly missed multiple extended deadlines, including the most recent target of March 2026. Compounding these environmental worries, local authorities have failed to protect existing avenue trees from suffocating urban infrastructure. Hundreds of roadside trees remain tightly encased in thick concrete and tiles, blocking vital access to water and oxygen. A recent GBA survey identified 128 problematic avenue trees facing this issue, which causes weak roots and sudden collapses during heavy rains.

Frustrated GBA officials revealed that they wrote to municipal chief engineers four months ago requesting immediate action to clear a one-meter radius around choked trunks, per National Green Tribunal rules. However, they have received absolutely no response. Despite a statewide government order mandating the freeing of tree bases to improve survival rates, lack of departmental coordination continues to threaten Bengaluru's fragile canopy.

Journalists share equal responsibility with politicians, says Bommai

BENGALURU

Former Karnataka Chief Minister and MP Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday said journalists carry a social responsibility equal to that of politicians, as their reports and decisions have a direct impact on society.

Speaking at the Karnataka Union of Working Journalists (KUWJ) Talent Awards programme organised to honour meritorious children of journalists, Bommai said intelligence and influence should be used for public welfare rather than to conceal wrongdoing.

"Just as decisions taken by those in power affect society, reports written by journalists also shape public opinion and influence governance," he said.

Highlighting the role of the media in a democracy, Bommai stressed that journalists must ask meaningful and probing questions. He noted that strong and relevant questioning helps improve governance and encourages accountability among public representatives.

Referring to the relationship between politicians and the media, Bommai said the two are interdependent. "Politicians need the media to communicate their work to the public, while newspapers and media organisations depend on political developments to inform their readers," he said.

He also expressed concern over misinformation in the digital era and urged journalists to uphold truth, ethics and public interest in their work.

KUWJ State President Shivananda Tagadur said the association has been recognising talented children of journalists every year to encourage academic excellence.

Several dignitaries, senior journalists and public representatives attended the event, where outstanding students were felicitated for their achievements.

Illegal tree felling sparks severe public outrage

BENGALURU: A viral social media post alleging the illegal felling of healthy trees outside a commercial café in north Bengaluru has triggered severe public outrage. The incident has reignited deep community concerns re garding the city's rapidly shrinking green cover and the glaring lack of official accountability. The controversy erupted after an resident shared photographs showing chopped tree branches outside a Starbucks outlet on Sahakarnagar Main Road. The user openly accused local businesses of intentionally damaging healthy street trees to improve storefront visibility and facilitate private cable installations.

QUICK READ

Gadag to host free bride and groom meet

CH NEWS, Gadag
A free state level bride and groom conference will be held on June 14 at 9 am at Ganiga Bhawan in Gadag, organized by All India Ganiga Vidya and Udyogavardaka Trust All India Ganiga Vidya and Udyogavardaka Trust in cooperation with local groups. Registration for the conference is open until 10 June 2026 and interested participants must submit a passport size photograph Aadhaar card and biodata for entry. We allow only two persons to accompany each participant and details can be obtained through contact numbers issued by organizers for guidance and smooth participation in the event as per official press release statement issued.

Deputy Tahsildar found dead in Hassan lodge

CH NEWS, HAASAN
Deputy Tahsildar Thimmaiah aged 52 was found dead in a private lodge on B M Road in Hassan on Saturday night. He was working in Saligrama of Mysuru district and originally belonged to Kodagu. He lived with his family in Hassan city. Police said he had written a four page death note before taking the extreme step. The lodge staff informed police after the incident came to light. Officers rushed to the spot and conducted inspection. Police from Barangay Police Station registered a case and began investigation into the incident. They are examining the contents of the death note to understand the reason behind the suicide. Senior officers said all possible angles are being checked. The body was sent for post mortem examination. Authorities have informed the family members and are recording their statements. The incident has created shock among colleagues in the revenue department. Further inquiry is in progress to find exact cause and circumstances of the death and ensure legal action as per law.

Ravikumar demands two ministerial posts for Mandya district

Ravikumar said he does not seek a ministerial post, believes seniors should be prioritized

MANDYA

Mandya MLA Ganiga Ravikumar has said that Mandya district should get two ministerial posts and stated that if DK Shivakumar gets power he too will get responsibility in the government.

Speaking to media in Mandya he said his forty years of hard work has paid off and expressed happiness about DK Shivakumar becoming Chief Minister. He also said Siddaramaiah has governed without any black mark and will continue good administration. He added that opposition parties are showing double standards by changing their statements on leadership. He said there is no desire for ministerial post and as a first time winner he believes seniors should get priority while qualified newcomers should also be given opportunity. He named leaders like Ashok Rai, Sivaganga Basavaraju, Bharat Reddy and Pradeep Easwar as deserving candidates. He said his constituency has received enough funds and he will focus on development work there. He praised Chaluvarayaswamy for good work as minister and said Narendra Swamy has his own quota based role. He also noted that Ramesh Bandisidde Gowda has won three times and his family has a political background. He said if Mandya gets another ministerial berth the district will develop further and expressed confidence in smooth and fair governance in the government.

He also appealed for unity among leaders and said development of Mandya is more important than personal positions. He stated that cooperation between senior and young leaders will bring stronger governance and better results for public welfare. He added that transparency and equal opportunity will strengthen democracy in the district.

Raju Gowda criticises Congress leadership change

YADGIR

Former minister from Surapura constituency Narasimha Nayak, also known as Raju Gowda, has said that the resignation of Siddaramaiah from the post of Chief Minister is politically damaging for the Congress party and may cost it heavily in the 2028 Assembly elections.

Speaking to reporters in Yadgir city, he said the move had personally hurt him and indirectly criticised the decision to replace Siddaramaiah as Chief Minister.

Chikkamagaluru district MLAs seek ministerial representation in cabinet

CHIKKAMAGALURU

Political discussions on ministerial berth have intensified in Chikkamagaluru district after recent changes in Karnataka state leadership and upcoming cabinet expansion.

Congress party won all five assembly constituencies in the district in the 2023 elections, creating strong expectations that local MLAs would get ministerial representation in the cabinet, but none were included during the earlier formation, leading to continued demand from supporters.

G. H. Srinivas, a two-time MLA from Tarikere constituency, has expressed interest in a ministerial position and said he has already discussed the matter with senior party leaders, adding that he is ready to take responsibility if given the opportunity.

For many years, Chikkamagaluru district has been represented by in-charge ministers from outside the district, including several leaders across different governments

Sringeri MLA T. D. Rajegowda is also seeking a cabinet post and credited the party workers and voters for the Congress victory in the district, stating that he has successfully handled responsibilities earlier and is prepared to serve as minister if selected.

It is notable that for many years Chikkamagaluru district has been represented by in-charge ministers from outside the district, including leaders such as Abhayachandra Jain, Dr. G. Parameshwar, K. J. George, Roshan Baig, S. Angara, K. S. Eshwarappa, Kota Srinivas Poojary and Araga Gyanendra across different governments.

The political circle is now debating whether Chikkamagaluru district will finally receive a local minister in the upcoming cabinet expansion and whether long standing expectations of voters will be fulfilled after years of waiting. The final decision will depend on the Congress high command and will become clear after the reshuffle is announced, ending the speculation in district politics.

Leaders and supporters from different constituencies believe that giving representation to experienced MLAs from the district will strengthen governance, improve development work and bring better coordination between the state government and local administration in the Malnad region.

Party workers say the issue is also about regional pride and fair opportunity for Chikkamagaluru leaders who played a key role in the 2023 electoral success.

Until the cabinet announcement is made, discussions and lobbying efforts are expected to continue strongly across the district as aspirants and community groups push for inclusion in the state ministry.

Rural education event inspires discipline and ambition

MANDYA

N. Chaluvarayaswamy Well-wishers' Association distributed bags to school children and presented talent awards at the Hanakere Raitha Shiksha Sanstha premises in the taluk.

Sachin Chaluvarayaswamy, MDCC Bank President, inaugurated the programme and said students should not focus only on winning but move forward with clear goals. He advised them to reduce mobile phone use and concentrate on studies, using technology only for positive purposes. He also encouraged rural students to develop their talents through discipline and hard work.

M.B. Nagannagowda of Karunadu Organization appreciated the initiative and said such social programmes help strengthen government schools. He urged the association to expand support by improving facilities in schools and colleges across the district. Students who scored high marks in SSLC were honoured with Pratibha Puraskar. The programme was attended by several educationists, leaders and guests, and concluded successfully.

Several dignitaries including Rajanna, Vice President of Raitha Shiksha Sanstha, H.P. Mahesh, Lecturer N. Rajendras ingh Babu, businessman Raghu and leaders Mahendra, Jayaram and Siddegowda participated in the programme. During the event, meritorious SSLC students were awarded the Pratibha Puraskar for their academic performance and encouraged to continue their studies with dedication and confidence. The organisers said the programme was part of a social service initiative in celebration of CRS Birthday, aimed at supporting government schools and motivating rural students.

Protest erupts against Karnataka SIR process

KOPPAL

The first round of the SIR Karnataka Resistance movement was held in Koppal to oppose the Special Intensive Revision process conducted by the Election Commission of India. It brought together lawyers activists writers and members of progressive groups and secular organisations to express concern over voter rights in the state.

Senior lawyer S Asif Ali former member of the Karnataka State Waqf Board strongly opposed the process during the public protest and addressed the gathering.Speakers including farmer leader Veer Sangaiah Mufti Nazir Ahmad Siraj Siddapura Shailaja Hiremath Salmajan and others participated and highlighted issues related to democratic rights.

The protest also saw participation from writers thinkers activists and representatives of various organisations who demanded that voter rights should be protected and the revision process should be reviewed carefully.

Speakers said that transparency is important in electoral procedures and any changes must be carried out in a fair and inclusive manner to maintain public trust in democracy.

Participants urged authorities to ensure that no eligible voter is excluded and that the process remains free from bias or administrative errors affecting citizens rights.

Leaders also appealed to the Election Commission of India to review concerns raised in the protest and engage with civil society groups to strengthen democratic participation in the state and ensure fair and transparent voter listing process in all regions of Karnataka going forward as citizens expressed strong concerns.

Chaitanyakumar Dundanappa Nirale's complaint states Nirale family victims were involved in a land dispute that escalated into violence

Chadchan family mass murder case shock Karnataka

CHADCHAN

A brutal mass murder in Govindapura village near Chadchan has shocked Vijayapura district, after five members of the same family were killed in a violent attack allegedly linked to a long-standing land dispute. Police have registered an FIR against 12 accused in connection with the incident and have launched a detailed investigation.

According to the complaint filed by Chaitanyakumar Dundanappa Nirale, the victims belonged to the Nirale family. The incident reportedly took place when tensions over agricultural land escalated into violence. Officials said preliminary findings indicate that the dispute had been ongoing for several months between the Nirale family and another group over

ownership and cultivation rights of the land.

Police sources said that the accused allegedly attacked the family members when they arrived at the disputed site to carry out clearing work. It is alleged that pepper powder was thrown into their eyes before they were attacked with lethal weapons, leading to the death of five people on the spot.

Senior police officials, including the Inspector General of Police of the North Range and the Superintendent of Police, visited the crime scene and reviewed the situation. A special investigation team has been formed to trace and arrest all the accused named in the FIR. Authorities said multiple angles are being examined, including property disputes and prior conflicts between the families.

The bodies of the deceased were handed over to the family after postmortem examinations. The final rites were performed at the local burial grounds amid emotional scenes, with hundreds of villagers and relatives gathering to pay their last respects.

The incident has created tension in the region, prompting increased police deployment in Govindapura and surrounding villages to maintain law and order. Officials have assured strict action against those responsible once the investigation progresses further.

Bidar job fair offers 327 student placements

BIDAR

A major job fair titled "Major Job Fair – 2026" was held at Lingaraja Appa Engineering College in Bidar, drawing an overwhelming response from students across various colleges.

More than 1,000 students participated in the event, where several reputed companies conducted recruitment drives and selected 327 candidates by issuing job offer letters. The fair aimed to provide employment opportunities to students and connect education with industry needs.

The programme received blessings from President of Sharanbasaveshwar Vidyavardhak Sangh and Chancellor of Sharanbasava University Dr Dakshayani Avvaji and Mahadasoha Peethadhipati Pujya Dodappa Appa, whose support was acknowledged for making the event successful.

Speaking at the event, organisers said that in today's competitive world, skills are as important as academic degrees.

They advised students to understand industry expectations and develop technical knowledge, communication skills and professional abilities to build strong careers.

Satish Jarkiholi defamation post sparks police action

BELAGAVI

A police case has been registered at the Belagavi district CEN police station over a social media post targeting Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.This action follows a Facebook post from an account named 'Karunada Kuruba Goudru', which falsely claimed that Satish Jarkiholi had betrayed Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and also spread rumours about collecting signatures of 37 MLAs. A complaint was filed by supporters of Satish Jarkiholi, including Valmiki community leader Rajashekar Talawara, stating that the content was completely false and intended to damage his reputation and create public confusion. Police said the post was aimed at creating unrest and misleading the public, and they have begun a detailed investigation into the matter.

Officials at the Belagavi CEN police station confirmed that a case has been taken up and legal proceedings are underway, while further verification of digital evidence and online activity linked to the post is in progress to identify those responsible for spreading misinformation and necessary action will follow.

Vehicle loses control near Chikkamagaluru plantation area

CHIKKAMAGALURU

A tourist Fortuner car returning to Bengaluru after visiting Mullaiyanagari and Seethalayanagari hills lost control and crashed into a roadside plantation near Kaimara check post.

Panic spread but all six tourists escaped without injury. Locals and passing motorists rushed to help and ensured everyone came out safely from the damaged vehicle. Chikkamagaluru Rural Police visited the spot and inspected the accident site. They said preliminary inquiry shows that overspeeding and sharp bend on the hill road caused the driver to lose control of the vehicle. Police advised tourists to drive carefully on winding roads as the area sees heavy weekend traffic.

KARUNADA-CULTURE-CELEBRATION

Kannada Literature meet celebrates unity spirit

HAVERI

All pro-Kannada minds of the district came together for the 2nd State Level Kannada Literature Conference held in Haveri at Dr B R Ambedkar Bhavan to celebrate Kannada literature, culture and unity under one platform.

State president Udachappa Malagi said that the conference helped strengthen Kannada literature and culture and praised the efforts of organizers and writers who worked for the success of the event.

Speakers highlighted protection of Kannada land, water, heritage and culture and said continuous efforts are needed to grow Karunada Kannada literature movement and appreciated state president S D Mudenna for his leadership and service and also mentioned that he was honored with Karunada Struggle Seva Ratna award. During the event writer G M O Karanna presided over the conference and S D Mudenna was honored by district representatives for his contribution to Kannada literature and cultural service. Sev eral social leaders and committee members attended the progr amme and supported the aim of promoting Kannada language and culture across the district.

Many leaders and community members including Manjappa Marola Malatesh Yallapur Suresh Chalavadi Subhas Chavan Shankar Meharwade Nagaraja Harijan and others participated in the programme and expressed their support for Kannada cultural development and literary growth in Haveri and across Karnataka and emphasized the importance of unity among pro Kannada organizations and continued efforts to preserve language heritage and encourage young writers to contribute actively to Kannada liter ature movement and cultural ac tivities in the state and organize rs thanked all participants for m aking the conference a success and called it a meaningful step towards strengthening Kannada identity and pride in the region.

CEO Rishi Anand lauds Chavan leadership qualities

VIJAYAPURA

KK Chavan Deputy Director of the Women and Child Development Department was given a warm farewell in Vijayapura Karnataka after completing 32 years of dedicated government service. The ceremony was held in the Zilla Panchayat hall whe re officials staff and representatives from various departments gathered to honor his contribution and long public career.

Chief Executive Officer Rishi Anand appreciated Chavan's service and described him as a gentle and approachable officer who guided younger staff with good governance practices throughout his career. He said Chavan handled administrative responsibilities with calm leadership even under work pressure and always supported his subordinates with clear direction and efficient task management. Chavan expressed gratitude to all officers and staff for their cooperation during his long tenure and said that serving in the department for over three decades was the most fulfilling experience of his life.

QUICK READ

Horrific road crash kills five labourers

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Five people died on the spot in a horrific series of accidents on National Highway 7 in Bagepalli after a Thar car hit an auto which then crashed into a lorry parked on the roadside. Eight labourers were travelling in the auto to work and five, including four women and one man, lost their lives while others were seriously injured and taken to Bagepalli Public Hospital. Police said the speeding Thar first hit the auto, causing it to lose control and crash into the parked lorry. The Thar driver fled from the scene, and police are searching for him and checking all angles of the case. Officials also said action will be taken against the lorry owner if any violation is found. District Superintendent of Police visited the spot and said investigation is underway and CCTV footage is being examined to trace details of the incident. Rescue teams and locals helped shift injured people quickly to hospital for urgent treatment.

Bear sighted in Kamanur village raises alarm

KOPPAL

Kamanur village in Koppal taluk witnessed panic after a bear was spotted near a residential area causing concern among residents. Locals noticed the animal close to houses and raised an alarm forcing it to move towards nearby farmland. Forest Department officials arrived at the spot and inspected the area. They set up a trap to capture the bear and are monitoring its movement.

Authorities have urged villagers not to panic and avoid unnecessary movement near forest edges. They also requested immediate reporting if the animal is seen again in the area. The Forest Department said safety measures are being strengthened to prevent any harm to people and livestock. Officials are keeping watch on the surrounding fields and preparing to capture the bear safely. Residents are advised to stay alert until the situation is fully under control at present now. Forest officials continue monitoring the area closely and have increased patrols to ensure public safety and prevent any further movement of the bear into the village limits area.

Bidar protest demands withdrawal of SIR process

Protesters claimed the SIR process is unscientific and may disproportionately impact marginalised groups like poor, workers and minorities

BIDAR

A strong protest was held in Bidar city against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter list, with several social organisations and political groups demanding its immediate withdrawal. The demonstrators alleged that the process is arbitrary, non-transparent and could lead to the exclusion of genuine voters from the electoral rolls.

The protest began at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Circle, where members of organisations such as Eddelu Karnataka, Dalit Sangharsha Samiti and other progressive groups gathered to raise slogans against the SIR exercise. They later took out a rally and submitted a memorandum to the District Administration addressed to the Chief Minister

and the State Chief Electoral Officer.

In their memorandum, the protesters claimed that the SIR process is being implemented in an unscientific manner and could disproportionately affect marginalised communities including the poor, workers, rural populations, minorities and backward classes. They alleged that even minor discrepancies in spelling or documentation are being used as grounds to remove eligible voters.

The organisations also opposed the use of what they termed "Logical Discrepancy" software, calling it non-transparent and unsuitable for democratic processes. They demanded that voter data be made available in a computer-readable and publicly verifiable format to ensure transparency and easy access for citizens.

The protesters urged the Election Commission and the state government to strictly follow constitutional procedures while revising voter lists. They demanded publication of draft electoral rolls in every Gram Panchayat and ward for public scrutiny, along with adequate time for correction of errors.

They also called for simplified verification procedures, especially for married women, migrant workers, nomadic communities and economically weaker sections, to ensure that no eligible citizen is denied voting rights due to documentation issues.

Leaders warned that if their demands are not addressed, the agitation would be intensified across the state in the coming days.

Mahalakshmi Layout moves toward TB free

BENGALURU

The MLA said the initiative aims for a TB-free India starting in Mahalakshmi Layout, with monthly kits distributed and patients urged to follow treatment guidance

A continuous nutrition kit distribution programme for tuberculosis patients was held today in Mahalakshmi Layout, where the MLA's trust and the Health Department are jointly working to make the constituency completely TB free.

The programme has been running for the past 47 months without interruption, focusing on supporting TB patients with monthly nutritional assistance. During today's event, the MLA personally distributed kits containing more than 13 types of nutritious food items to patients.

The MLA said the initiative is aimed at achieving the dream of a TB free India starting from Mahalakshmi Layout constituency. He added that the trust and health department are working together with a strong commitment to eliminate tuberculosis locally.

He also said that kits are being distributed every month at a cost of around ₹2.5 to ₹3 lakh and stressed that maintaining public health is a top priority for the constituency. He urged patients to use the kit only for their own treatment and follow medical guidance properly.

He explained that if the kit is used regularly for six months, TB can be fully cured and patients may not need to continue further distribution visits after that period.

Health officials and local leaders also participated in the programme. They appreciated the continuous effort and said such initiatives help improve recovery rates and awareness among patients.

Several community representatives including Dr Nagendra, Dr Manjunath Gowda, Raghavendra Shetty, Nagaratnamma, Padmavathi Srinivas and others were present along with health department staff and local workers.

The programme concluded with a call to strengthen awareness, ensure proper treatment adherence and work collectively toward a TB free society in the constituency through sustained health support and community participation in coming years.

AOfficials said the building follows an IT and BT model in Bengaluru, improving service delivery and efficiency

MLA S T Somashekhar praises BESCOM service

KENGERI

MLA S T Somashekhar said that BESCOM is working in a customer friendly manner to provide electricity services quickly under one roof for public benefit while speaking at the inauguration of the new K-4 sub division building in Visvesvaraya Layout fourth block.

Officials said the building is designed on IT and BT model and is considered a model infrastructure in Bengaluru aimed at improving customer service and efficiency. Executive Engineer Shivakumar and his team have ensured good service delivery under guidance of senior officers and are working towards permanent solutions for public grievances.

West Zone Executive Engineer N Shivakumar said that due to MLA grant support and cooperation the construction of the building became possible and assured better service and faster resolution of issues. Several officials and public representatives attended the programme including Chief Engineer Kashiram Pawar Superintending Engineer Narayan Swamy Women Block President Suma Janardhan Anil Kumar Devaraj Ramesh Gowda Prakash Gowda and Aman Ullah. They expressed appreciation for the new facility which aims to improve public service delivery in Kengeri division and strengthen electricity distribution and complaint redressal system in the region.

BESCOM officials said the new building will help provide faster transparent and citizen friendly services and strengthen power supply in the area with better coordination among departments and staff. They added that continuous improvement and citizen satisfaction remain the top priority of the department and the event concluded with commitment to reliable power supply in Kengeri area in coming years. Officials said similar infrastructure upgrades will continue in other divisions to improve citizen services.

Mass rally demands High Court bench in Shivamogga

SHIVAMOGGA

A large-scale protest and mass rally demanding the establishment of a High Court circuit bench in Shivamogga gained momentum, drawing participation from thousands of people and multiple organisations.

The agitation, led by the Advocates' Association, saw a massive procession beginning from the court premises and moving through key city routes before culminating in a public meeting near the Deputy Commissioner's office.

Chikkaballapura police crack murder case in 24 hours

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Chikkaballapura police have successfully cracked a brutal murder case within 24 hours, arresting a woman and her cousin who killed her sister-in-law for money and fabricated a fake robbery story. The victim, Pushpalatha, was found dead on May 28 in her family home in Bapuji Nagar.

Initially, the family claimed that thieves had broken into the house, suffocated the victim, slit her throat, and stolen her gold necklace and earrings. The victim's sister-in-law, Bhavya, was found at the scene pretending to be unconscious from a chemical spray. However, police investigators quickly grew suspicious during questioning when Bhavya's dramatic statement failed to match the physical evidence at the crime scene.

A medical autopsy later revealed that Pushpalatha had actually died from suffocation with a pillow before being stabbed, contradicting the family's bloody robbery narrative. Furthermore, there were absolutely no signs of forced entry at the home's main entrance.

Under intense police interrogation, Bhavya broke down and confessed to the entire plot. She revealed that her cousin, Lohit Kumar, had been blackmailing her with a private video and extorting money. Desperate for cash, Bhavya and her mother planned to steal Pushpalatha's heavy gold jewelry. Bhavya purposefully left the front door unlocked for Lohit to enter and commit the murder while the rest of the male family members were away visiting a temple. Police have arrested both Bhavya and Lohit, and are currently interrogating the mother-in-law regarding her involvement.

Protest held over minimum wage revision issue

HAVERI

DYFI State Secretary Basavaraj Poojara has urged the state government to revise the minimum wage and fix it at an average of ₹36,000 for all workers, saying it is necessary in view of rising prices and the increasing cost of living.

He was speaking at a protest organised by the Centre of Indian Trade Unions district committee in front of the district administration building on the outskirts of Haveri city. He said the recent government notification issued on May 22, which revised minimum wages and reduced wage zones from four to three for most industries, is a positive step that will benefit lakhs of workers facing financial stress.

However, he strongly objected to the exclusion of several poor women workers from 19 sectors including garments, plantations, beedi and handloom industries.

Ramanagara celebrates ahead of Shivakumar's coronation

RAMANAGARA

Massive celebrations have broken out across Ramanagara as fans and Congress party workers prepare for the official coronation of D.K. Shivakumar as the new Chief Minister of Karnataka. The highly anticipated oath-taking ceremony is scheduled to take place on June 3.

Following the formal leadership announcement from the Congress high command, an electric atmosphere filled Shivakumar's home district. Huge 50-foot cutouts and vibrant congratulatory banners have been erected at major intersections, including the prominent Aizur Circle and the Channapatna Gandhi Bhavan. Eager supporters have decorated streets with banners highlighting "Respect for party loyalty," celebrating his elevation even before the official swearing-in.

Despite the intense excitement, Shivakumar and his brother, D.K. Suresh, had previously issued strict instructions to party workers in their home constituency of Kanakapura, ordering them not to put up celebratory buntings or banners before the high command's transition process was fully completed. However, passionate fans elsewhere in the district could not hold back their enthusiasm.

Apart from his political influence, Shivakumar is widely known as one of the wealthiest politicians in India. He often describes himself as a farmer by birth, a businessman by profession, an educationist by choice, and a politician by passion. According to his official 2023 election affidavit, his massive financial portfolio stands at ₹1,413 crore, spanning extensive interests in real estate, stone quarrying, shopping malls,

Devotees fund for development of Veera Brahmendra Temple

PAVAGADA

Many devotees contributed for the development of Sri Veera Brahmendra Swamy Temple at KT Halli village in Nidgallu Hobali of Pavagada taluk on Sunday. The temple trust president K H Hanumanta Rayappa donated fifty thousand rupees and appealed to all devotees to support the temple construction. Committee secretary Lokesh Palegar said villagers are jointly building the shrine and requested more donors to come forward and complete the remaining work quickly. Several community members attended the donation program held there today.

Temple committee secretary Lokesh Palegar said the Sri Veera Brahmendra Swamy temple is being built by villagers in the valley of KT Halli and urged devotees to donate generously. He added that strong community participation will help complete the temple construction at the earliest possible time. Devaraju and Nagaraju have taken responsibility for making grills and doors for the temple structure work. Many villagers including retired soldier and local leaders participated in the program and supported construction work today event.

Several devotees and community members also contributed to the temple development fund during the program. K H Manjunath, Mugadala Betta Bhaskaranayaka, Hanumantharayappa, Parvathamma Shailapur and others donated for construction work, while Devaraju and Nagaraju took responsibility for grills and doors. Program concluded with devotees expressing hope that the temple will be completed soon and become a spiritual center for surrounding villages in the region always sacred.

Ramanath Rai accuses BJP of weakening Panchayat Raj system

BANTWAL

KPCC vice president B. Ramanath Rai on Saturday alleged that the BJP is attempting to weaken the Panchayat Raj system and mislead the public through false propaganda.

He was speaking at a protest organised in front of the Bantwal Taluk Administrative Office in B.C. Road by the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Raj Organisation and the Bantwal–Pana Mangalore Block Congress Committee.

Rai said the concept of decentralisation and empowerment of rural governance was originally strengthened through reforms introduced during the tenure of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. He claimed that the Congress played a key role in implementing the Panchayat Raj system effectively in Karnataka, enabling the transfer of power to grassroots institutions.

He further alleged that the BJP has consistently opposed and undermined the Panchayat Raj framework while spreading misinformation. According to him, the Congress-led government in the state has prioritised development works and welfare schemes.

Rai stated that development projects worth around ₹5,000 crore have been undertaken in the Bantwal region under the current administration. He also accused the central government of adopting economic policies that have adversely affected the poor and middle class.

KPCC spokesperson Sudhir Kumar Muruli criticised the central government's policies and raised concerns about irregularities in education and examination systems, including alleged question paper leaks. He called for accountability and stronger corrective measures.

He also warned party workers to remain alert during electoral roll revisions, alleging that technical errors could lead to the removal of eligible voters' names. He further referred to alleged irregularities in recent election counting processes and demanded vigilance.

H.C. Balakrishna tipped for Karnataka cabinet post

MAGADI

In Magadi, Arya Eediga community leaders have urged the Congress High Command to consider key cabinet posts for local leaders.

MLA H.C. Balakrishna from Magadi has represented the constituency for five consecutive terms and is known for development work. Supporters say he deserves a ministerial position based on his long public service and strong voter support.

Senior Congress leader B.K. Hariprasad is also being strongly recommended by the Arya Eediga community for inclusion in the state cabinet. Community representatives say his experience and voice for backward classes make him an important leader in Karnataka politics.

Community vice president Venkatesh said both leaders should be given ministerial roles to ensure regional and social justice. He added that Magadi and Arya Eediga community expectations must be respected by the party leadership without delay.

QUICK READ

Ghaziabad teen murder: 'No criminal will be spared'

CH NEWS, Lucknow
After the absconding main accused in the case involving fatal stabbing of a teenager in Ghaziabad was killed in police action, Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, while saying that the state government has taken a serious view of the incident, said that no one involved in any kind of criminal activities will be spared. Speaking to repor ters, the Deputy Chief Minister said: Police had caug ht those involved in Surya Pratap Chauhan's murder, and during a subsequent police action, the main accused was killed. All those responsible for the murder and related cri minal activities would face strict action. The government remains fully committed to maintaining law and order in the state.

KMC identifies 3,000 illegal constructions in Kolkata

CH NEWS, Kolkata
The Building Department of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) has reported the identification of approximately 3,000 illegal constructions throughout the city, as stated by a civic body official on Sunday. The official indicated that the constructions, additions, and extensions ma de to thousands of these residences are entirely unlawful and are subject to demolition at any mome nt. Numerous suchillegal structures have emerged in the vicinity of the EM By pass in eas tern Kolkata. Among the six boroughs of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation, the majority of illegal construc tions ha ve occurred in regions su ch as Beliagh ata, Tangra, Tiljala, Burrabazar, Topsia, Kasba, Garden Reach, Me tiabruz, Cossipore, Chitpur. Certain areas have been designated as 'red zones' by the building department of the KMC.

Kedarnath Yatra resumes after temp suspension

CH NEWS, Rudraprayag
The Kedarnath Yatra resumed on Sunday after a brief suspension due to heavy rainfall across Uttarakhand. Movement of pilgrims restarted as the weather cleared up and operations were restored on the Kedarnath trekking route after rainfall ceased. However, if the weather deteriorates later in the day, the pilgrims will again be asked to take shelter at the nearest safe locations till the conditions im pro ve. he Kedarnath Yatra was temporarily suspended earlier in the day, after the weather department issued an orange alert amid extreme rainfall. Speaking to repor ters, Ru draprayag District Magis trate (DM) Vishal Mish ra had said the region experienced overnight rainfall.

Cong alleges CBSE data leak, Board denies

The party raised concerns over student privacy, while CBSE strongly rejected allegations of security breaches

NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday alleged a major security and privacy breach involving the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), claiming that answer booklets of nearly 20 lakh Class 12 students were exposed in the public domain. The allegations have triggered a fresh political controversy, although the CBSE has firmly denied any compromise of its evaluation systems.

Congress leader and former Union Minister Jairam Ramesh accused the education board of failing to protect sensitive student data and questioned the processes adopted for digitising and evaluating answer sheets. In a post on social media platform X, he described the alleged exposure as a massive data leak that could potentially affect the privacy of millions of students.

Ramesh also raised concerns regarding the scanning process used for answer booklets under the On-Screen Marking (OSM) system. According to him, some of the leaked answer sheets appeared to contain visible folds, shadows and

image-quality issues that suggested they may not have been scanned using advanced equipment. He questioned whether the vendor responsible for the project had used the required technology and alleged that changes made to tender conditions may have benefited the company awarded the contract.

The Congress leader further claimed that the quality of the scanned documents raised serious questions about the implementation of the project and the safeguards put in place to protect student records.

However, the CBSE has categorically denied all allegations of security lapses. The Board stated that claims circulating on social media regarding the compromise of its On-Screen Marking platform were inaccurate and misleading. According to the CBSE, a social media user had alleged that a particular evaluation portal had been breached earlier this year, prompting several reports and discussions online.

In response, the Board clarified that the portal mentioned in those claims was not the system used for the evaluation of answer booklets. It emphasized that the actual platform employed for the marking process operated through a different web address and had neither been compromised nor exhibited the vulnerabilities highlighted in the social media posts.

The CBSE also assured students, parents and stakeholders that strong security measures remain in place to safeguard examination records and maintain the integrity of the evaluation process. It reiterated that no verified security breaches had been detected.

The controversy has also drawn comments from senior opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, who had earlier questioned the awarding of contracts related to the scanning of answer sheets.

NDA leaders intensified criticism of Rahul Gandhi following historian Ramachandra Guha's comments on Congress leadership.

NDA leaders target Rahul over Guha remarks

NEW DELHI

A fresh political controversy erupted on Sunday after several leaders of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) cited remarks made by noted historian Ramachandra Guha to criticize Congress leader and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi.

NDA leaders described Gan dhi as a burden on the Congress party and questioned his leadership credentials following Guha's observations on the party's functioning.

The debate stems from an article written by Guha in whi ch he reportedly characterized the Congress as operating like a family firm, referring to the influence of the Nehru-Gandhi family within the party. He also questioned Rahul Gandhi's leadership style, stating that the Congress leader lacked gravitas and had failed to learn from past political setbacks.

The remarks attracted significant attention because Guha has often been perceived as someone who maintained cordial relations with sections of

the Congress leadership in the past. His criticism has therefore been viewed by political observers as particularly noteworthy.

Reacting to the article, BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poon awalla launched a sharp attack on Rahul Gandhi. He claimed that Gandhi had been repeatedly rejected by voters and faced criticism not only from political opponents but also from leaders within his own party and allian ce. Poonawalla described Gan dhi as a political liability and argued that the Congress should reassess its leadership strategy.

Senior BJP leader Syed Shahnawaz Hussain echoed similar sentiments, asserting that concerns about Rahul Gandhi's leadership were not new. He argued that the Congress had struggled electorally under Gandhi's leadership and claimed that the party lacked a clear future direction.

BJP legislator C. P. Singh also joined the criticism, alleging that Congress leaders continued to support Rahul Gandhi primarily because of his family background rather than his political performance.

Meanwhile, Janata Dal (United) spokesperson Rajiv Ranjan Prasad said that Guha's remarks carried significant weight because of his perceived proximity to the Nehru-Gandhi family. He suggested that Congress leaders should take the historian's observations seriously and reflect on the party's future under its current leadership.

Adding to the chorus of criticism, Shiv Sena spokesperson Krishna Hegde argued that the Congress would need to look beyond the Nehru-Gandhi family if it hoped to revive its political fortunes and expand its appeal among voters. The Congress had not issued a detailed response to the latest comments at the time of reporting.

'PM SVANidhi' empowers millions of street vendors

NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal Khattar on Sunday hailed the PM SVANidhi Scheme as a transformative initiative that has significantly improved the lives of street vendors across India.

He said the programme, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2020, has empowered millions of urban poor by providing financial assistance, enhancing livelihoods and promoting inclusion in the formal banking system.

Addressing the impact of the scheme, the minister stated that the PM SVANidhi initiative was designed with a broader vision than merely extending collateral-free loans. According to him, the programme seeks to provide dignity, confidence and opportunities for street vendors, enabling them to achieve financial security and gain greater social recognition.

Manohar Lal emphasized that street vendors form an essential part of the urban economy and contribute significantly to daily life in cities and

towns. Recognising their struggles and hard work, the government introduced the scheme to support their businesses, particularly during challenging economic conditions.

The minister revealed that more than 75.5 lakh street vendors have benefited from the programme during the past six years. He further noted that over 1.12 crore collateral-free loans have been sanctioned under the scheme, with total disbursements exceeding Rs 17,800 crore across the country.One of the key achievements of the PM SVANidhi Scheme, according to the minister, has been its role in expanding financial inclusion. He said that lakhs of beneficiaries who previously had limited or no access to formal banking services have now become part of the financial system. This integration has enabled many small vendors to access credit, build financial histories and participate more actively in the formal economy.

The minister stressed that the scheme has helped create pathways for self-reliance among street vendors by providing them with easier access to institutional finance. He said that connecting beneficiaries to the banking system for the first time has strengthened their economic stability and reduced dependence on informal lending channels.

Highlighting the programme's reach in the North-Eastern region, Manohar Lal said more than 2.59 lakh loans have been distributed to street vendors in the region. The total financial assistance provided there has crossed Rs 430 crore, reflecting the scheme's expanding footprint in states that have traditionally faced challenges in access to credit.

Referring specifically to Tripura, the minister stated that more than 9,300 loans have been sanctioned under the initiative, with nearly Rs 15 crore disbursed to beneficiaries in the state.

Bihar couple attacked on lonely stretch in Telangana

HYDERABAD

Unidentified men attacked a couple, killing the woman in front of her husband in Telangana's Sangareddy district, police said on Sunday.

The incident occurred at IDA Bollaram near Hyderabad. According to police, Anil Kumar, a native of Bihar and his wife Meena Devi were returning home on a bike from the market. The vehicle broke down near Gundigudem playground.

Some unidentified men attacked Anil Kumar and dragged his wife into the bushes and slit her throat, resulting in her death. When Anil Kumar tried to rescue his wife, they attacked him with knives. He sustained grievous injuries and was admitted to a private hospital.

The body of Meena Devi (35) was shifted to the mortuary at the local government hospital for post-mortem exam ination. The victim's gold ornaments were untouched, and there were no signs of sexual assault. On a complaint by Anil Kumar, a case was registered at IDA Bollaram Police Station.

The couple were residing in Venkateshwara Colony. They went to the market to buy some groceries. As they were returning home and their vehicle broke down at an isolated place, unidentified men attacked them.

In another incident in Kamareddy district of Telangana, a man was murdered over a land dispute. The body of Raja Reddy, who was missing for the last three days, was found in a well in Lingapur village. Police found the deceased's two-wheeler and mobile phone near a function hall. Police took up the investigation and arrested a man and his son for the murder. The accused confessed to their crime and led the police to the area where they had dumped the body.

Meanwhile, a married woman died under suspicious circu mstances in Rangareddy district. Bhavani, who had married only 11 months ago, allegedly died by suicide at her residen ce. However, her parents alleg ed that she was murdered.

RaGa interacts with Vedant, mocks 'anti-national' slur

NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday continued his attack on the Union Education Ministry and the CBSE over Class 12 evaluation discrepancies by posting on social media a video featuring Vedant and other students who faced problems in seeking copies of their answer booklets.

A revealing chat with my fellow 'anti-national Soros agents.' Vedant and his friends are brilliant, brave young Indians who asked CBSE and the Modi government simple questions - but got insults instead of answers. They deserve a bright and secure future. We will make sure they get it, said Gandhi, referring to some social media users who branded students reporting issues with the CBSE's system as anti-national.

CBSE says vulnerabilities have been contained as experts work to enhance security of evaluation systems.

CBSE strengthens 'OnMark' portal amid security concerns

NEW DELHI

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Sunday said it is actively monitoring and addressing vulnerabilities in the OnMark portal used for examination-related services, while a team of cybersecurity experts from government agencies and premier academic institutions has been deployed to strengthen the platform's security infrastructure.

The statement comes at a time when the board's On-Screen Marking (OSM) system for Class 12 examinations has come under increased public scrutiny following reports of technical issues and concerns related to the digital evaluation process. The controversy has prompted many students to seek access to their evaluated answer sheets after noticing what they believed were unexpected variations in their examination scores. In its official statement, the CBSE acknowledged that certain vulnerabilities associated with the OnMark portal operated by its service provider had been flagged in public discussio ns. The board, however, em pha sized that it has been closely monitoring the situation and ta king corrective measures to address any identified weaknesses.

According to the CBSE, cybersecurity professionals from various government departments as well as experts from the Indian Institutes of Technology have been working over the past several days to fortify the systems. The board said efforts include migrating services to a more secure environment and conducting comprehensive reviews to eliminate any remaining exploitable weaknesses.

The board further stated that the vulnerabilities identified so far have been successfully contained and that investigations are continuing to ensure the overall security and integrity of the platform. In a notable move, the CBSE expressed appreciation for citizens and ethical hac kers who brought potential weaknesses to its attention. The board said it had directly contac ted some individuals who repor ted concerns and encouraged others with relevant information to communicate with its designated security teams to support ongoing cybersecurity efforts.

The issue gained prominence following reports of technical glitches associated with the implementation of the digital evaluation system. According to in formation that emerged duri ng reviews of the process, the OSM platform was introduced without a nationwide pilot project before being adopted for large-scale use in Class 12 assessments.

Subsequent examinations of the evaluation process reportedly revealed that a significant nu mber of answer books required additional scrutiny.

COPS GO SCIENTIFIC WAY

First-of-its-kind 'E-Malkhana' launched in Manipur

IMPHAL

Manipur Police have, for the first time, introduced the 'E-Malkhana' system to ensure efficient, transparent and scien tific management of Malkha nas (designated storehouses for seized property and case exhibits) at the police station level, officials said on Sunday.

The digital initiative is aim ed at improving the storage, tra cking and disposal of case- related property and evidence, while enhancing accountability, transparency and operational efficiency in police station administration, a senior police official. He said that the Mal khana of Irilbung Police Station in Imphal East district has been upgraded and converted into an 'E-Malkhana' under the new digital management system.The initiative was undertaken by Imphal East district Superintendent of Police Shivanand Surve and Police Pooja Malani, both IPS officers, as part of efforts to modernise police infrastructure and strengthen evidence management practices.

According to the official, the new system ensures scientific storage, proper management and easy retrieval of case properties and exhibits. Under the E-Malkhana system, every exhibit and seized property is catalogued and digitally recorded for efficient monitoring and management. Each item is assigned a unique barcode containing detailed information such as the FIR number, relevant sections of law, name of the Investigating Officer, description of exhibits, photographs, present status and disposal details.

The barcode is also linked to the concerned case record, enab ling quick identification, verification and retrieval of exhibits whenever required during inve stigation or court proceedings.

The E-Malkhana system promotes systematic documentation, accountability, transparency and better preservation of case properties through digital record management. It also minimises the chances of misplacement, duplication and procedural delays associated with conventional record-keeping methods. The official noted that the initiative has significantly improved the efficiency of Malkhana management and represents a major step towards the adoption of modern technology and scientific practices in police station administration.

2 more arrested in Rs 1K cr land racket case in Cyberabad

HYDERABAD

The Cyberabad Police in Telangana have arrested two more ac cused in the case relating to an alleged conspiracy to illegally encroach valuable government land by creating fake Government Orders and false official records

The police on Sunday announ ced the arrest of Veladi Radhakrishna and his driver Gyara Praveen Kumar, named as accused numbers nine and 10, respectively. Police on May 29 claimed to have busted a Rs 1,000 crore land scam with the arrest of three persons. The case relates to creating fake Government Orders (G.O.s) and false official records to illegally sell 10 acres of government land worth nearly Rs 1,500 crore in Gandipet. A case under sections 338, 336(3), 318(4) and 61(2) BNS was registered in Narsingi Police Station on May 23 on a complaint from Srinivas Reddy, Tahsildar, Gandipet Mandal, Rangareddy district.

QUICK READ

PM Krishi Sinchayee Yojana strengthens water conservation

Ajmer

Under the Central government's flagship 'Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana' (PMKSY), several water conservation and irrigation development projects worth crores of rupees have been undertaken in various villages of Rajasthan's Ajmer district. These initiatives have improved water availability in rural areas while also contributing significantly to rainwater conservation and groundwater recharge.

According to Shalabh Tandon, District Nodal Officer for the Vande Ganga Water Conservation Campaign, multiple water-related infrastructure projects have been developed under the scheme.

In Tikawada village, water recharge shafts, tanks, water conservation structures, and rainwater harvesting facilities have been constructed.

Police search TMC MLA Mitra's Kamarhati house

Kolkata

Police conducted a search operation at Trinamool Congress MLA Madan Mitra's house in the Kamarhati area of North 24 Parganas district on Sunday. Barrackpore Police Commissionerate Deputy Commissioner (South) Dyutiman Bhattacharya led the search operation. When the police reached Madan Mitra's house on Sunday afternoon, it was locked and the MLA was not present. However, the police broke open the lock and entered the premises. After conducting a search for around an hour, they locked the house again and left. It is learnt that the house is named 'Uday Villa'.

Rajeev Krishna appointed Uttar Pradesh's new DGP

Lucknow

Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government announced the appointment of Acting DGP Rajeev Krishna as the new Director General of Police (DGP) of the state on Sunday. An order to this effect was released in a notification, signed by Additional Chief Secretary Sanjay Prasad. The move brings an end to the prolonged wait for a full-term DGP for the state, as the post purportedly remained vacant after the removal of then DGP Mukul Goyal from the post in 2022.

Rajeev Krishna has been commanding the state police force in the capacity of Acting DGP, and now, with the announcement of his elevation as the permanent police chief, this ends a long hiatus of four years for the top post.

'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' off to a vibrant start

Spearheaded by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, this month-long campaign is designed as a mass grassroots movement to promote sustainable farming, protect soil health, and empower farmers

NEW DELHI

India is set to launch a nationwide campaign aimed at protecting agricultural land and promoting sustainable farming practices, with Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan calling for the commencement of the 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' from June 1.

The initiative seeks to educate farmers about the adverse effects of excessive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides on soil health and agricultural productivity.

Ahead of the official launch of the campaign from Ramsiya village in Madhya Pradesh's Raisen district, Chouhan held a virtual interaction with representatives from Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Indian Council of Agricultural Research institutions, agricultural universities, senior officials from the Central and state governments, and organisations engaged in farmers' welfare. During the interaction, he highlighted the growing challenges confronting Indian agriculture, including rising temperatures, deteriorating soil health, climate-related concerns, and the widespread imbalance in the use of agricultural chemicals.

The minister stressed that awareness and practical interventions are urgently required to address these issues. He said the campaign would focus on informing farmers about balanced fertiliser application, soil testing, the use of soil health cards, natural farming techniques, crop selection, water conservation measures, green manuring, and alternative agricultural methods suitable for regions experiencing low rainfall. The initiative will also help farmers identify counterfeit fertilisers, seeds, and pesticides.

Chouhan underlined the importance of strengthening farmers' confidence through field demonstrations, scientific evidence, and practical examples. He directed authorities to prepare a detailed implementation roadmap extending until June 30. The plan should clearly specify which officials, scientists, institutions, or teams will visit particular villages and on which dates.To ensure smooth execution, the minister instructed that district-level programmes be planned in advance and monitored through a dashboard-based system. He also called for adequate local arrangements and effective coordination at every stage of the campaign.

Emphasising the importance of collective participation, Chouhan said the success of the campaign would depend on close cooperation among the Central government, state governments, research institutions, agricultural universities, extension centres, public representatives, students, and farmer-support organisations. He further encouraged Members of Parliament, legislators, and other elected representatives to actively participate and showcase successful examples of natural farming and sustainable agricultural practices to inspire farmers across the country.

SIR: Electoral roll revision, enumeration begins in 4 states

The exercise is aimed at ensuring that all eligible citizens are included in the electoral rolls while omitting ineligible voters.

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Sunday announced the commencement of the enumeration phase under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) – Phase III in the states of Odisha, Mizoram, Sikkim, and Manipur.

The exercise is aimed at ensuring that all eligible citizens are included in the electoral rolls while preventing the inclusion of ineligible names.

According to the Commission, all eligible electors whose Enumeration Forms are received by the respective Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) on or before June 28, 2026, will be included in the Draft Electoral Rolls. Those who are unable to submit the forms within the stipulated period will still have an opportunity to apply for inclusion through Form-6 along with the prescribed Declaration Form during the claims and objections phase.

As part of the enumeration process, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) are conducting extensive house-to-house visits to distribute, collect, and verify Enumeration Forms from existing voters. The ECI stated that electors can submit the completed forms either directly through BLOs or through online channels, making the process more accessible and convenient.

To ensure comprehensive coverage, BLOs are visiting every household within their assigned areas. The Commission also directed BLOs to carry at least 30 blank Form-6 applications and Declaration Forms during field visits so that eligible individuals who are not yet registered can immediately begin the enrollment process.

In a move aimed at increasing the involvement of political parties, the ECI has permitted Booth Level Agents (BLAs) of recognised political parties to collect up to 50 forms per day from the public and hand them over to BLOs before the publication of the draft rolls. National and state-recognised political parties have also been encouraged to appoint additional BLAs to support the revision process and ensure its smooth implementation.

Tripura chit fund convicts get 6-year jail

AGARTALA

In a significant development in the long-running Tripura chit fund case, a Special Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Court has sentenced three senior officials of a private company to six years of rigorous imprisonment for misappropriating public deposits worth several crores of rupees.

The Special Judge (CBI) of West Tripura District delivered the judgment on Saturday, convicting Arindam Das, Chairman and Managing Director of Pragati Sheel Infra Projects and Services Limited, along with Director Paritosh Das and Administrative Director Dipshikha Chakraborty. Each of the three convicts has also been fined Rs 3 lakh.

According to the CBI, the accused collected deposits from members of the public through various investment schemes but failed to return the money. Investigators found that the company had allegedly misappropriated deposits amounting to approximately Rs 5-6 crore, causing financial losses to numerous investors.

The court also convicted Pragati Sheel Infra Projects and Services Limited as a corporate entity and imposed a separate fine of Rs 7 lakh on the company.

The case has its origins in a complaint registered at Kailashahar Police Station in Tripura on April 30, 2012. Following notifications issued by the Tripura government and the Department of Personnel and Training, Government of India, the case was re-registered by the CBI on October 8, 2013, for a detailed investigation.

The central agency subsequently examined allegations that the company and its officials had cheated investors by failing to refund deposited funds. After completing its investigation, the CBI filed a chargesheet on May 28, 2018, against the three officials and the company.

In its order, the Special Court directed that the fine amount recovered from the convicts be forwarded to the competent authorities for distribution among affected depositors. The court instructed that the funds be routed through the District Magistrate and Collector of Unakoti District, Kailashahar, who will ensure proportionate distribution according to the requirements of the respective sub-divisions.

Additionally, the court requested the competent authorities to take all possible legal measures to recover the defrauded amount from the attached assets of the company and the accused. The recovered funds are to be distributed among identified depositors and investors who have not received their money back.

The judgment is being viewed as an important step toward securing justice for investors affected by the alleged financial fraud and reinforcing accountability in cases involving public deposits.

SDRF rescues over 50 pilgrims stranded in swollen river

DEHRADUN

More than 50 devotees had a narrow escape on Sunday as they headed to Gurudwara Shri Reetha Sahib during the ongoing 'Jod Mela' in Uttarakhand; however, the vigilant disaster teams averted the tragedy by swiftly mounting a timely operation to rescue all of them.

The incident occurred at the historic Shri Reetha Sahib Gurudwara in Champawat district, where Sikh devotees had arrived in droves to participate in the three-day annual fair, held to commemorate Guru Nanak Dev's historic visit. The fair, on average, draws 2 lakh devotees every year.

As the group of pilgrims were taking a bath in the Ladhiya river, the sudden rise in water levels left them in a precarious position, putting their lives in peril.

The SDRF team, after getting information about the mishap, swiftly moved in and saved the lives of over 50 devotees, who got stranded due to a sudden rise in the water stream. The sudden gush of water created chaos, and devotees panicked.

According to eyewitnesses, a large number of devotees were bathing in the water reservoir, at the confluence of the Ladhiya and Ratiya rivers, before offering prayers at the Gurudwara Sahib. Heavy rainfall in the region caused the river's water level to rise suddenly, forcing more than 50 to 60 devotees to scramble for safety. They clung to a small structure in the middle of the river, and the rescue teams pulled them to safety.

Due to the rising waters, several vehicles also became stuck in the riverbed area. Assessing the gravity of the situation, the SDRF team took charge and guided the vehicles to safety. They demonstrated courage, patience, and exceptional professional skills to safely guide all the stranded.

First woman ADC posted at Odisha Lok Bhavan

BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Governor Dr Hari Babu Kambhampati has appointed IPS officer Ananya Awasthi as the Aide-de-Camp (ADC) to the Governor, making her the first woman officer to serve in the prestigious position.

According to an official statement, a formal induction ceremony was held at Lok Bhavan on Sunday, where Governor Kambhampati welcomed Awasthi to her new assignment as the Police ADC. Senior officials of the Governor's Secretariat were present on the occasion.

It is pertinent here to mention that prior to her appointment, Awasthi was serving as the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Urban Police District, Cuttack. As the first woman to serve as ADC to the Governor of Odisha, her appointment marks a significant milestone for the participation of women in public service.

The 2022-batch IPS officer succeeds fellow IPS officer Kuldeep Meena, who previously served as the Police ADC to the Governor. During a recent reshuffle carried out by the state government, Meena, a 2021-batch IPS officer, has been appointed as the Superintendent of Police of Boudh district.

Notably, the Governor of Odisha is assisted by two Aides-de-Camp -- one from the Indian Navy and the other from the Odisha Police.

While Ananya Awasthi will serve as the Police ADC, Lieutenant Harshit Deo of the Indian Navy will continue as the Naval ADC to the Governor.

The ADC plays an important role in assisting the Governor during official engagements, ceremonial functions, and other protocol-related duties.

Meanwhile, Awasthi's appointment as the first woman ADC to the Governor of Odisha is being viewed as a landmark achievement in the state's public service landscape.

The historic posting underscores the increasing role of women in leadership and ceremonial positions within the police and administrative framework.

TRIPURA CRACKS DOWN ON ILLEGAL INFILTRATION

AGARTALA

Over 3,705 foreign nationals, including 3,463 Bangladeshis, have been arrested in Tripura since 2022 for illegally entering India, officials said on Sunday.

A senior Home Department official stated that 965 Bangladeshi nationals were arrested in 2022, followed by 1,014 in 2023; 947 in 2024; and 537 in 2025.

Most of the foreign nationals have already been deported to their respective countries after completion of diplomatic and standard legal procedures, the official told IANS, refusing to be quoted.

Currently, 220 arrested foreign nationals remain lodged in various jails across Tripura.

According to the official, of the total 3,706 foreign nationals apprehended, 227 are Rohingya, while the rest belong to countries including Nigeria, Cameroon, Guinea, France, and Pakistan.

During the recent budget session of the Tripura Assembly, Chief Minister Manik Saha had said that the government is working with utmost seriousness to prevent infiltration from across the border. He noted that following the regime change in Dhaka, the state government constituted Special Task Forces (STFs) in all eight districts to tackle infiltration-related issues, in line with directives from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

BSF GETS PUSH

Border security gains renewed national focus

NEW DELHI

The Union government's renewed emphasis on border security has emerged as a significant component of its broader national security strategy, reflecting a deeper focus on both external protection and internal stability.

Recent reviews led by Union Home Minister Amit Shah have highlighted the government's determination to strengthen border management and address concerns related to illegal infiltration and migration.

While border security has always been a core responsibility of the Home Ministry, the current exercise is being viewed as more extensive in scope and intent.

Observers note that the government is not only focusing on physical security along international borders but is also examining networks that facilitate illegal entry, identifying vulnerabilities in administrative systems, and taking measures to prevent unlawful encroachments.

The initiative comes as the government enters its thirteenth year in office and seeks to reinforce what it describes as a comprehensive approach to national security.

For many years, infiltration from neighbouring countries, particularly across sensitive border regions, remained a topic of political discussion.

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ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರಕಾರ
ಒಂದು ಮತ್ತ ಸ್ವಚ್ಛತೆಯ ಕಡೆಗೆ

CITY MUNCIPAL COUNCIL HAVERI
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REF No.:CMCH/CIVIL/CR- /2026-27/113 Date:30-05-2026

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

The Municipal Commissioner, City Municipal Council, Haveri (Civil Works) invites tender in General Enterprises Fund for **Rs.200.00 lakhs** from registered eligible Contractors as follows. Tender documents may be downloaded from the **kppp-procurement portal Tenders must be electronically submitted (online, through kppp-procurement portal) The tender Descriptions are as follows**

Sl. No	Brief Description	Estimate cost lakhs	Amount cost lakhs	EMD (in Rupees)	Work Completion
1	DMA/2026-27/BD/ WORK_INDENT58818	200.00	169.45	Rs.2,54,000/-	12 months

Sd/-
Muncipal Commissioner
CMC, Haveri.

DIPR/Haveri/122/DeshpandePublicity/2026-27

QUICK READ

Deadly tourist bus fire shatters western Turkiye

ISTANBUL

A joyful holiday turned into a nightmare when a tourist bus crashed and burst into flames, killing eight people and injuring 33 others. The vehicle was heading from Izmir to the beach resort of Antalya when it suddenly struck a highway guardrail in Denizli Province. The impact sparked a massive fire, trapping people inside. Tragically, the driver and a nine-month-old baby were among the dead. Rescuers rushed survivors to nearby hospitals, though their conditions remain unclear. Police are now investigating whether mechanical failure or driver fatigue caused this heartbreaking disaster.

Deeply alarming Ebola outbreak hits DR Congo

BUNIA

A rapid Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has created a "deeply alarming" crisis, according to reports. Declared just two weeks ago, the virus has already caused over 1,000 suspected cases and 246 deaths, spreading faster than any previous outbreak. The disease has also reached neighboring Uganda. Health officials warn that ongoing local conflict and airport closures are crippling aid delivery. Furthermore, the true scale of the disaster remains unknown as hundreds of samples await testing. The World Health Organization is urging local communities to halt traditional funeral practices to stop the deadly virus from spreading.

Colombia votes in high stakes presidential election

BOGOTA

Colombians are heading to the polls for a polarizing presidential election that could reshape the country's relationship with the United States. The vote follows months of heavy tension between current left-wing President Gustavo Petro and U.S. President Donald Trump over drug trafficking. Petro's chosen successor, Iván Cepeda, promises to maintain peaceful negotiations with drug gangs. In contrast, right-wing rivals Abelardo de la Espriella and Paloma Valencia are promising a fierce military crackdown and closer U.S. ties.

Iran war adds fresh strain to Pak's fragile economy

Rising West Asia tensions and closure of Strait of Hormuz trigger a severe cost-of-living crisis, driving fuel and daily goods prices beyond reach.

ISLAMABAD

Growing political troubles between the United States and Iran are causing a massive cost-of-living crisis for everyday people in Pakistan.

Local residents in Islamabad are expressing deep worries as rising fuel prices and expensive daily goods place an unbearable financial burden on poor and middle-class households.

Many locals say this foreign conflict is hitting their wallets hard. With salaries staying the exact same, families are struggling to buy basic necessities.

Citizens linked the recent surge in inflation to disruptions in global energy markets caused by the US-Iran confrontation and tensions surrounding the Strait of Hormuz, a critical oil shipping route.

They said petrol prices in Pakistan reportedly surged from around Rs 250 per litre to as high as Rs 450 before easing slightly to above Rs 400 per litre. Diesel prices have also witnessed similar increases, placing additional pressure on transportation and commodity costs.

Residents argued that higher fuel prices inevitably lead to increases in public transport fares, food prices, and other essential goods. Some claimed inflation had risen by as much as 300 per cent, leaving poor and middle-class households struggling to cope.

Residents also blamed the continued deadlock on geopolitical rivalries and alleged external interference in the peace process.

Calling for an immediate end to hostilities, Islamabad residents urged all parties to prioritise negotiations, stressing that peace is essential to stabilising fuel prices, controlling inflation, and preventing further hardship for millions of Pakistanis.

11 dead in Washington factory tank implosion

Eleven dead after a massive industrial tank imploded at a Washington packaging plant, spilling a toxic chemical mixture into the nearby Columbia River.

WASHINGTON DC

A tragic factory accident in Washington state has left eleven people dead after emergency crews recovered the bodies of nine missing workers. The disaster occurred when a massive industrial storage tank imploded at the Nippon Dynawave Packaging facility, completely destroying parts of the building.

Two deaths were confirmed shortly after the initial collapse, but the search for the missing workers continued throughout the entire week. Specialized recovery teams had to carefully navigate heavy piles of debris inside the facility while flying drones over the outer perimeter to search for signs of life. Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue officials stated that the difficult rescue operation finally ended after all the victims were located.

The broken tank held roughly 900,000 gallons of a highly caustic chemical mixture known as "white liquor," which is commonly used to process wood into paper pulp. Environmental officials confirmed that a significant amount of the chemical spilled out of the factory grounds and entered the nearby Columbia River.

Despite the chemical leak into the waterway, local authorities stated that initial health tests show no immediate danger to the public. Air quality levels around the disaster site remain stable, and the drinking water supply for the nearby city of Longview has not been affected. However, environmental teams will stay on-site to monitor the river water. Investigations are now underway to determine exactly why the massive industrial tank suddenly failed, as the community mourns the sudden loss of eleven workers.

Nepal PM pledges peaceful border talks

KATHMANDU

Nepal's Prime Minister, Balendra Shah, announced that the ongoing border disputes with India will be solved peacefully using dialogue and diplomatic channels. The prime minister made these reassuring statements while addressing the country's parliament for the first time since winning the national elections back in March.

During his speech, Shah strongly emphasized the great importance of direct negotiations. He told lawmakers that the neighboring countries would eventually fix their border issues through table talks and steady diplomatic efforts.

Israeli forces captured southern Lebanon's Beaufort Ridge, crossing the Litani River to dismantle Hezbollah networks and expand operations.

ISRAEL CAPTURES BEAUFORT RIDGE IN LEBANON

TEL AVIV

Israel's Defence Minister, Israel Katz, announced that military forces have captured the historic Beaufort Ridge in southern Lebanon. Calling the mission a major strategic victory, Katz revealed that Israeli troops crossed the Litani River to expand their active operations against Hezbollah targets positioned further north.

The defense minister noted that this specific operation holds great historical meaning, as it took place around the anniversary of the famous 1982 Battle of Beaufort. Soldiers from the Golani Brigade

led the recent assault, successfully reaching the peak of the ridge to raise the Israeli flag over the historic site once again.

According to Katz, the military push was directly ordered by himself and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He explained that taking control of the ridge was absolutely vital for protecting northern Israeli towns and keeping military personnel safe. The government had previously kept the dangerous mission a strict secret to prevent enemy forces from gathering intelligence.

The Israel Defense Forces stated that the primary goal of the mission was to dismantle a heavy network of military infrastructure built on the ridge. Military officials claimed that Hezbollah fighters had been using the high-ground position to organize combat activities and launch numerous attacks against Israeli civilians.

Koizumi criticizes China's lack of military transparency

SINGAPORE

Japan's Defence Minister, Shinjiro Koizumi, strongly rejected accusations that his country is embracing "new militarism." Speaking at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Koizumi turned the focus toward Beijing, criticizing China for rapidly expanding its military forces with very little public transparency.

Koizumi stated that China's massive defense spending and aggressive external approach are serious concerns for both Japan and the global community. Rebutting China's recent warnings for Asian nations to resist Japanese actions, Koizumi pointed out that China holds a massive arsenal of nuclear weapons and strategic bombers, while Japan possesses neither. He argued that Japan's peaceful track record since World War Two and its commitment to United Nations laws speak for themselves.

However, Chinese delegate Major General Meng Xiangqing hit back at the forum. Meng questioned whether Japan was even qualified to discuss international defense cooperation, claiming the nation has not fully cleared its past toxic legacy of wartime invasion.

Ties between the two superpowers have worsened since Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi warned that a Chinese attack on Taiwan could trigger a Japanese military response. China still claims Taiwan as its own territory.

Koizumi expressed sadness that he could not meet his Chinese counterpart, Dong Jun, who skipped the summit for the second year row. Still, Koizumi insisted Japan's door remains open for peaceful dialogue. He concluded that Tokyo is determined to boost regional deterrence and export defense equipment to help smaller Asian nations stand firm against external coercion and pressure.

China's factory growth halts as exports decline

BEIJING

China's manufacturing sector slowed down dramatically in May due to falling export orders and rising raw material costs. According to data, the country's official purchasing managers' index dropped to a three-month low of 50, down from 50.3 in April.

Because the 50-point mark separates economic growth from contraction, the latest figures show that factory activity has officially stalled. While factory supply managed to rise, overall demand weakened. Specifically, new export orders plunged significantly from 50.3 to 48.6, driven by global trade uncertainties connected to conflicts in the Middle East.

China launches patrols near disputed Scarborough Shoal

BEIJING

China's military and coast guard launched combat readiness patrols near the disputed Scarborough Shoal. The move came just one day after the Philippines publicly warned that it remains under a severe political and territorial threat from Beijing.

The Chinese patrols closely followed a five-day joint maritime exercise conducted last week by Philippine and United States forces in the exact same waters. According to the Philippine military, these drills were designed to strengthen defense ties and improve security teamwork. However, China's Southern Theatre Command stated that it's naval and air patrols were necessary countermeasures to handle provocative acts and rights violations in the area.

Scarborough Shoal is located in the South China Sea, an area Manila refers to as the West Philippine Sea. The atoll is one of Asia's most contested regions, serving as a frequent flashpoint for conflicts over sovereignty and fishing rights. China claims ownership over almost the entire South China Sea, drawing a boundary line that cuts directly into the economic zones of the Philippines, Vietnam, and other neighboring countries.

Speaking at a major defense summit in Singapore, Philippine Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro emphasized that Manila faces constant Chinese aggression. He noted that the threat remains high despite recent peace talks between the U.S. and Chinese presidents. In 2016, an international court ruled that China's massive sea claims have no legal basis, but Beijing has rejected that decision. The Philippines vows to stand firm as dangerous standoffs continue to disrupt regional peace.

PUBLIC NOTICE / WARNING

It is hereby informed to the general public that my client Sri. A.S.SUDHEENDRA, M/S SUMAYA PROPERTIES MYSURU, had issued a Blank Cheque bearing No 000116 drawn on HDFC Bank, in favour of Sri. Srikanth Gupta S., (Auditor) S/o B.V. Srikanth Gupta (AADHAAR NO: 5795 0586 7682), which was duly issued in connection with a transaction which is completed and the said cheque has not been returned.

It has come to my client's knowledge that there are misleading statements/claims suggesting misuse of the said cheque. I hereby clarify that the said cheque was issued only towards a genuine transaction which has already been completed, and therefore there is no question of misuse.

Any person dealing or relying upon any contrary claims shall be doing so at their own risk and responsibility. The issuer of the cheque shall not be liable for any loss or consequence arising there from.

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Ukrainian drones strike Russian oil facilities overnight

KYIV

Ukrainian drones targeted energy infrastructure deep inside Russian territory overnight, striking a major oil refinery and a vital pipeline pumping station. Both Russian and Ukrainian authorities confirmed the strikes, signaling a sharp escalation in Kyiv's targeted campaign against Russia's lucrative fuel network.

According to Ukraine's General Staff, a long-range drone strike hit the Saratov oil refinery located along the Volga River, sparking a massive fire. The regional governor confirmed that civil infrastructure was damaged in the attack. Furthermore, Kyiv announced a successful strike on the Lazarevo pumping station in the Kirov region, located roughly 800 miles from Ukrainian territory. This facility powers a major pipeline transporting Siberian oil across Russia toward Belarus.

The aerial conflict was massive on both sides. Russia's Defence Ministry claimed its air defense systems successfully shot down 216 Ukrainian drones overnight.

Yunnan mine collapse leaves five dead

BEIJING

A sudden mine shaft collapse during an illegal mining operation in southwestern China has killed five people and injured one other. The tragic accident occurred just days after the country suffered its deadliest mining disaster in nearly two decades.

According to reports, the incident happened in Huize County, located within the Yunnan province. Local emergency crews rushed to the scene and managed to pull six people out of the collapsed underground shaft. Unfortunately, only one person survived the ordeal and was rushed to a nearby hospital, where medical officials reported they are currently in stable condition. Local government reports did not specify what type of mineral was being illegally pulled from the ground.

This latest tragedy follows a massive, deadly gas explosion that occurred at a coal mine in northern Shanxi province.

Malta's Labour Party wins historic 4th term

VALLETTA

Maltese Prime Minister Robert Abela claimed a historic victory, securing a record-breaking fourth consecutive general election win for his ruling Labour Party. The decisive political triumph ensures the party will continue to lead the European Union's smallest nation after a highly competitive campaign season.

Addressing reporters and cheering crowds, Abela called the outcome a victory for all citizens.

SRI LANKA'S FUEL FRICTION

Sri Lanka hikes fuel prices 5th time

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka has raised its retail fuel prices yet again as the ongoing conflict in West Asia continues to disrupt global energy markets. The state-run oil company, Ceylon Petroleum Corporation, announced the price increases, which officially went into effect at midnight.

This latest price hike marks the fifth time the country has raised fuel costs recently. The decision follows multiple public warnings from President Anura

Kumara Dissanayake, who has repeatedly urged citizens to cut back on their daily fuel consumption. The president stressed that these conservation measures are absolutely necessary to help the nation survive the intense economic pressures caused by the overseas war.

According to data provided by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation, the price of petrol has jumped by 5.85 percent, while the price of diesel has gone up by 3.83 percent. These sudden increases are expected to trickledown quickly, raising the cost of public transportation, food deliveries, and everyday household goods across the island nation.

Local residents are expressing deep worries about the rising cost of living, as salaries have not kept up with the rapid price changes. Government officials explained that because Sri Lanka relies heavily on imported oil, it has no choice but to adjust domestic prices when global supply chains are disrupted. Energy experts warn that if the tensions in the Middle East do not calm down soon, developing nations will continue to face severe financial strain and volatile market conditions.

QUICK READ

EaseMyTrip reports quarterly loss amid rising operating costs

MUMBAI

Online travel aggregator EaseMyTrip reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 15.4 crore in the fourth quarter of FY26, compared with a profit of Rs 13.9 crore in the same period last year. Revenue from operations increased 8.9 percent year-on-year to Rs 151.9 crore, while total expenses surged 38.6 percent, hurting profitability. For the full fiscal year, the company posted a net loss of Rs 47.5 crore against a profit of Rs 108.6 crore in FY25. Air ticketing revenue declined, though hotels and holiday packages recorded strong growth. EBITDA fell sharply, with margins narrowing significantly during the financial year.

Sridhar Vembu warns AI valuations exceed dotcom bubble

NEW DELHI

Zoho founder and chief scientist Sridhar Vembu has warned that soaring valuations of major technology companies, driven by artificial intelligence enthusiasm, resemble a market bubble larger than the dot-com boom of 1999. In a post on X, Vembu highlighted elevated price-to-sales ratios among leading firms, including Nvidia, Apple, Alphabet, Microsoft, Meta and Micron. He argued that such valuations appear disconnected from underlying business fundamentals. Referencing comments by former Sun Microsystems executive Scott McNealy after the dot-com crash, Vembu noted the difficulty of justifying high revenue multiples. His remarks come as AI-related stocks continue rallying on growth expectations worldwide.

RBI policy, geopolitics to guide markets next week

MUMBAI

Indian stock markets ended sharply lower as investors turned cautious ahead of key domestic and global events expected to influence sentiment next week. The Sensex fell 1,092 points, while the Nifty lost 359 points following heavy selling in the final hour of trade. Market participants will closely watch the Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee meeting scheduled from June 3 to June 5 for signals on interest rates, inflation and growth. Developments involving the United States and Iran, movements in crude oil prices, and foreign investor activity will also remain major factors. Falling oil prices may provide some support.

India's solar leap could become blueprint for other nations

As the nation moves forward, its balanced and forward-looking energy strategy continues to position it as a global clean-energy leader and model to emulate.

NEW DELHI

India's rapid expansion of solar energy is emerging as a model for developing nations seeking economic growth while reducing dependence on fossil fuels, according to a recent report.

At the center of this transformation is the Khavda solar park in Gujarat's Rann of Kutch, a vast renewable energy project spread across nearly 280 square miles near the India-Pakistan border. Once completed by 2029, the facility is expected to become the world's largest solar power project, generating 30 gigawatts of electricity through nearly 60 million solar panels.

The project highlights India's growing commitment to clean energy. The country's installed solar capacity has been increasing at an annual rate of around 40 percent and surpassed 150 gigawatts in March. Analysts expect that figure to double again by 2030 as India works to meet rising electricity demand while lowering carbon emissions.

Energy experts believe India could become the first major economy to industrialize primarily through solar power rather than coal. Kingsmill Bond, an energy strategist with the U.K.-based think tank Ember, said India is following a development path different from that of China and many Western countries, which relied heavily on fossil fuels during their industrial growth.

A decade ago, solar energy played only a minor role in India's power sector, while coal remained the primary focus for supporting economic expansion. India also resisted international calls to phase out coal, arguing that developing economies required affordable energy sources to tackle poverty and drive growth.

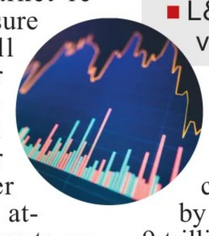
However, declining solar panel costs, technological advancements, and India's favorable climate have significantly changed the country's energy strategy. Since the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow, solar installations have accelerated rapidly.

According to the International Energy Agency, nearly half of India's additional electricity demand through 2030 is expected to be met by solar power, with other low-carbon sources contributing substantially to future energy needs.

Seven blue-chip firms shed ₹1.54 trillion

MUMBAI

- Market fell on weak sentiment
- Seven firms lost Rs 1.54T
- HDFC Bank saw biggest decline
- IT and banking stocks dragged
- L&T, SBI, LIC gained value



The combined market valuation of seven of India's 10 most-valued companies declined by Rs 1.54 trillion during the holiday-shortened trading week, reflecting cautious investor sentiment and persistent market volatility.

The broader market remained under pressure as the Sensex fell 639.61 points, or 0.84 per cent, while the Nifty declined 171.55 points, or 0.72 per cent, over the week. Analysts attributed the weakness to uncertainty in global markets and a lack of strong buying interest at higher levels.

Among the top firms, HDFC Bank recorded the steepest decline in market capitalisation. The lender's valuation dropped by Rs 33,333.06 crore to Rs 11.46 trillion. Bharti Airtel followed with a loss of Rs 25,408.96 crore, reducing its market value to Rs 11.14 trillion.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) also witnessed a significant erosion in value, losing Rs 22,920.58 crore and ending the week with a market capitalisation of Rs 8.15 trillion. Hindustan Unilever's valuation fell by Rs 13,169.46 crore to Rs 5.04 trillion, while Bajaj Finance lost Rs 7,253.24 crore, bringing its market worth to Rs 5.63 trillion.

ICICI Bank's market capitalisation declined by Rs 6,311.41 crore to Rs 9 trillion, adding to the overall losses among the country's largest companies.

Despite the weak market environment, three companies registered gains. Larsen & Toubro emerged as the biggest gainer, adding Rs 20,608.43 crore to its valuation and reaching a market capitalisation of Rs 5.61 trillion.

State Bank of India gained Rs 13,753.62 crore, while Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) added Rs 6,040.37 crore.

Analysts said Nifty faces immediate resistance at 23,900 and 24,100, while support levels remain at 23,400 and 23,200. Market direction in the coming week will depend on investor sentiment and global developments.

AAIB finds extensive engine damage in SWISS incident

Investigators found debris and extensive internal damage, while analysis of the flight recorders remains under way.

NEW DELHI

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has revealed extensive turbine and compressor damage in the engine of a Swiss International Air Lines aircraft that suffered a failure during take-off at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport in April.

According to the bureau's preliminary report, SWISS flight LX147 from New Delhi to Zurich aborted take-off at around 1:27 a.m. on April 26 after the aircraft's left-hand engine failed during the take-off roll. The incident, classified as a "serious incident," resulted in injuries to six people.

The Airbus A330-343 was carrying 245 occupants, including 232 passengers and 13 crew members. Investigators said the pilots rejected take-off after Engine No. 1 failed at a speed of approximately 106 knots. The crew reported hearing a loud bang, observing flames from the left engine, and experiencing a leftward deviation before bringing the aircraft safely to a stop.

A full emergency was declared at the airport, with emergency response teams immediately deployed. Four passengers reportedly sustained injuries during the evacuation and response process.

During inspections, investigators discovered metal particles and debris in the engine exhaust section. External examination revealed broken bolts and spacers associated with the high-pressure/intermediate-pressure bearing support system, while high-pressure bleed valves were found partially blocked by debris.

A borescope inspection further identified damage to the High Pressure Turbine blades, Nozzle Guide Vanes, Intermediate Pressure Turbine blades, Low Pressure Turbine blades, and High Pressure Compressor blades and stator vanes. Investigators also found that the high-pressure and intermediate-pressure shafts had seized, limiting a complete internal examination.

The AAIB said flight data and cockpit voice recorders have been removed for analysis. The investigation, supported by France's aviation safety agency BEA, Airbus and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency, is continuing to determine the root cause of the engine failure and assess whether safety recommendations are required.

Cafe Coffee Day returns to profit in FY26

BENGALURU

Cafe Coffee Day has staged a financial turnaround in FY26, returning to profitability and reporting strong growth in both revenue and operating performance, according to an exchange filing by its parent company Coffee Day Enterprises.

The company posted a consolidated net profit in FY26 after several years of financial stress, marking a significant milestone in its recovery journey. Revenue crossed Rs 1,094 crore during the fiscal year, reflecting improved store performance, better cost control, and gradual stabilization of operations across key markets.

Operating profit also showed a healthy improvement, with EBITDA rising 27 per cent year-on-year to Rs 198 crore. The improvement was driven by higher efficiency in café operations, optimization of underperforming outlets, and a sharper focus on core retail coffee business.

CCD, operated by Coffee Day Enterprises, has been working to rebuild its business model following years of debt challenges, leadership transition, and restructuring efforts. The latest results indicate that these corrective measures are beginning to reflect in financial performance.

The company has focused on streamlining its café network, improving customer experience, and strengthening supply chain efficiencies.

Adani shifts focus to growth after US issues

NEW DELHI

Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani has said the conglomerate's legal proceedings in the United States are now behind it, allowing the company to focus on accelerating growth across key infrastructure and energy sectors.

Addressing shareholders, Adani said the group's primary challenge is no longer raising capital but executing large-scale projects quickly enough to meet India's growing infrastructure and energy demands. He highlighted the rising importance of artificial intelligence, which is expected to significantly increase demand for power, data centres and digital infrastructure.

Adani described the Rs 24,930 crore rights issue by flagship company Adani Enterprises as a strong vote of confidence from investors despite governance and regulatory concerns faced by the group over the past year.

He said the conglomerate remained committed to building critical infrastructure even amid heightened scrutiny and challenging global conditions.

According to Adani, the group continued expanding its presence across energy, transport, logistics, utilities and industrial manufacturing while staying focused on long-term nation-building objectives. "The matters related to our US legal proceedings are now behind us, allowing us to focus with renewed confidence on the next phase of growth," Adani stated.

The chairman outlined a future strategy driven by two major themes — infrastructure and intelligence. He argued that rapid adoption of artificial intelligence will require substantial investments in electricity generation, transmission networks, logistics facilities and data centres.

Emphasizing the connection between energy and technology, Adani remarked that "before AI can think, energy must flow," underscoring the importance of reliable power infrastructure in supporting future digital growth.

The group also reported strong financial performance for the financial year 2025-26. Its portfolio companies posted consolidated revenue of Rs 2.92 lakh crore, representing a 7.4 per cent increase over the previous year. Profit after tax rose 13.9 per cent to Rs 46,377 crore, reflecting continued business expansion across its diversified operations.

The company now plans to accelerate investments as it positions itself for the next phase of growth.

Sensex, Nifty set for volatile range-bound trade next week

MUMBAI

Indian benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty are expected to remain range-bound and volatile in the coming week as investors navigate global uncertainties, technical resistance levels, and cautious market sentiment, according to market experts.

Analysts noted that the recent MSCI index rebalancing significantly increased volatility during the final trading hour on Friday, contributing to a sharp market decline. Despite trading within a narrow range for most of the session, heavy selling pressure emerged toward the close, dragging both benchmark indices sharply lower.

Technical analysts believe the Sensex continues to exhibit a negative bias as buying interest remains subdued at higher levels. Immediate resistance for the index is seen between 75,800 and 76,000, while the broader 76,500–76,700 zone is expected to act as a strong supply area.

On the downside, key support lies between 74,500 and 74,200.

A sustained breach below this zone could trigger further selling and push the index toward lower levels.

For the Nifty, experts highlighted that the index remains below its 20-week and 50-week exponential moving averages, indicating weak bullish momentum.

However, support from the long-term trend line remains intact. Immediate resistance levels are placed at 23,900 and 24,100, while support is seen at 23,400 and 23,200. A break below 23,200 may invite fresh selling pressure, whereas a move above 24,100 could improve sentiment and support a recovery.

DOMESTIC DEMAND STRONG

SAIL sees limited price impact amid crisis

MUMBAI

Steel Authority of India Limited (Steel Authority of India Limited) has indicated that the ongoing West Asia crisis is expected to have only a marginal impact on domestic steel prices, with an estimated rise of around Rs 100–200 per tonne, according to the company's newly appointed Chairman Ashok Panda.

The assessment comes amid concerns that geopolitical tensions in West Asia could disrupt supply chains and increase input costs for the steel industry. However, SAIL has maintained that its exposure to the region is limited and manageable.

The company noted that certain raw materials, including limestone and other inputs, are sourced from international suppliers such as Dubai. Despite this dependency, officials said the overall supply chain remains stable, and no major disruptions are currently anticipated.

Chairman Ashok Panda said the company has been closely monitoring global developments and assessing potential risks to procurement and logistics.

He added that contingency planning and diversified sourcing have helped reduce vulnerability to external shocks.

Industry analysts suggest that while global tensions often lead to short-term volatility in commodity prices, domestic demand conditions and inventory levels play a more significant role in determining steel price trends in India. As a result, any cost impact from the West Asia situation is likely to remain limited unless the crisis escalates significantly.

Steel Authority of India Limited remains one of India's largest public sector steel producers, with a broad presence across mining, production and distribution. The company has been focusing on capacity expansion and efficiency improvements to strengthen its position in a competitive market.

Need stronger RBI intervention for rupee stabilisation

MUMBAI

SBI Research has called for stronger intervention by the Reserve Bank of India, stating that the recent depreciation in the rupee appears to be moving beyond what is justified by underlying economic fundamentals, according to a new analysis cited in a report.

The research note highlights that while currency fluctuations are a normal part of global financial markets, the current pace of rupee weakness may reflect external volatility, capital flow pressures and global risk sentiment rather than domestic macroeconomic imbalance. It suggests that more proactive measures from the Reserve Bank of India could help stabilize expectations and prevent excessive speculative pressure in the foreign exchange market.

Analysts at State Bank of India Research noted that the rupee's recent trajectory has been influenced by multiple external factors, including shifting interest rate expectations in advanced economies, fluctuations in crude oil prices, and intermittent foreign portfolio outflows. Despite these challenges, India's core economic indicators, including growth momentum and external reserves, remain relatively stable.

The report emphasizes that orderly currency movements are essential for maintaining investor confidence, controlling imported inflation, and ensuring predictability for trade and investment decisions. It further argues that excessive volatility in the rupee can have a broader impact on financial conditions, particularly for import-dependent sectors such as energy and manufacturing.

Reason & Solution

- SBI calls for RBI intervention
- Rupee weak beyond economic fundamentals
- Global dollar strength pressures currency
- Capital outflows add depreciation pressure
- RBI urged to stabilize volatility

Healthcare in India: Cheaper, But Is It Better Than Other Countries?

When former U.S. President Barack Obama once took a swipe at what he called cheap health care available in countries like India and Mexico, the push-back from Indian health officials was swift and pointed. India's then Health Minister responded bluntly: India does not offer cheap healthcare; it offers affordable healthcare, and the distinction matters enormously. Affordable care without compromise, he argued, is not inferiority; it is a model the world ought to emulate.That exchange captures the central tension in any honest conversation about India's healthcare system: the country has built some of the most cost-effective, internationally respected medical institutions on the planet, while simultaneously struggling to provide even basic care to vast swathes of its 1.45 billion citizens. India's healthcare story is one of striking contrasts world-class cardiac surgeons operating in gleaming private hospitals a few kilometres from under-resourced rural clinics that barely meet minimum staffing standards.So the question is not simply Is healthcare in India cheaper and better? The more accurate question is: For whom, in which context, and compared to what? This article explores both sides of that question with honesty and depth.

The Price Advantage: Numbers That Speak for Themselves

On the dimension of cost, the evidence is difficult to argue against. India consistently ranks among the most affordable destinations for major medical procedures in the world. Consider cardiac surgery. A heart bypass procedure in the United States can easily exceed $70,000. In India, the same surgery at a comparable private hospital costs somewhere between $7,000 and $11,000 — a saving of roughly 85 to 90 percent. Knee replacement surgeries that run $40,000 or more in the UK or Australia can be performed at leading Indian hospitals for under $6,000. Liver transplants, spinal surgeries, cancer treatments, IVF procedures, and cosmetic surgeries all follow a similar pricing pattern.

The assumption that low cost implies low quality collapses quickly when examined against India's track record in elite healthcare.

India is home to over 60 Joint Commission International (JCI)-accredited hospitals and more than 4,650 hospitals accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) a figure that continues to grow year on year. JCI accreditation, recognised worldwide as the gold standard in healthcare quality, is held by fewer than 1,000 institutions globally. India's presence in that list is not merely symbolic; it reflects genuine adherence to international protocols in safety, hygiene, clinical outcomes, and patient care.

Indian surgeons particularly in cardiology, oncology, neurology, orthopaedics, and transplant surgery are internationally trained and globally respected. Many completed their residencies and fellowships at institutions in the United States and the United Kingdom before returning to practise in India. Hospitals like Narayana Health, founded by the renowned cardiac surgeon Dr. Devi Shetty, have achieved cardiac surgery mortality rates comparable to the best centres in the United States, at a tiny fraction of the cost. Medanta Hospital has featured in Newsweek's list of the top 250 hospitals in the world for five consecutive years as of 2024.

QUALITY THAT COMPETES ON THE WORLD STAGE

Top Indian hospital chains have adopted cutting-edge technology at a pace that surprises many Western observers. The Da Vinci robotic surgery system, used for minimally invasive procedures across urology, gynaecology, and oncology, is now widely deployed at major Indian centres. Proton therapy for cancer treatment, CAR-T cell therapies, and advanced laparoscopic techniques are increasingly accessible. The country's first robotic surgeries at the Malabar Cancer Centre in Kerala were successfully performed in 2024 and have since become routine.

Accredited Indian hospitals also post infection rates below 2%, consistent with international benchmarks, though quality across the broader system is more uneven.

Where India Still Falls Short: The Uncomfortable Truths

A complete picture of Indian healthcare requires honest acknowledgment of where the system continues to fail and it fails in ways that matter deeply.

The rural-urban divide is perhaps the most painful fault line. Two-thirds of public sector hospital beds in India are concentrated in urban areas, which house only one-third of the population. For the 65% of Indians who live in villages and small towns, the gleaming hospitals of Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, and Bengaluru might as well be on another continent. Rural primary health centres are chronically understaffed and under-equipped. Rural areas have 16% fewer primary health centres and 50% fewer community health centres than government-recommended numbers.

India faces a shortage of approximately 600,000 doctors and 2 million nurses, with the deficit most acute in rural and remote areas.

Healthcare professionals gravitate toward cities for better pay, infrastructure, and career opportunities; a rational individual choice that creates a systemic crisis for rural populations. States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and parts of Rajasthan bear the sharpest brunt of this inequity.

Out-of-pocket expenditure remains unacceptably high. Despite government schemes, many Indians particularly those in the informal economy; have no health coverage.

A serious illness can push a middle-class family into poverty.

The current annual rate of medical inflation in India stands at around 15%, far outpacing general inflation of 6–7%, making the affordability question increasingly fraught for the domestic population even as it remains favourable for international visitors.

Government health spending is critically low. India spends approximately 1.28% of its GDP on public health one of the lowest ratios among major economies. The WHO recommends at least 5% of GDP for a functional public health system. This underfunding translates directly into shortages: of equipment, medicines, diagnostic facilities, and trained personnel in the public sector.

Quality inconsistency is another concern. While JCI and NABH-accredited hospitals deliver internationally comparable care, hundreds of smaller, unaccredited private clinics and hospitals operate with far lower standards. Media reports of infections, negligence, and billing fraud in some facilities have justifiably raised questions about accountability and oversight.

The Medical Tourism Verdict

The most powerful proof of India's healthcare value proposition is not any statistic or government claim; it is the behaviour of international patients who vote with their feet and their wallets.

India welcomed approximately 7.3 million medical tourists in 2024, representing a tenfold increase from 2014. Foreign tourist arrivals specifically for treatment grew from under 200,000 in 2020 to over 644,000 in 2024 a dramatic post-pandemic rebound. The Indian medical tourism market was valued at $8.18 billion in 2024 and is projected to reach $27.18 billion by 2032, growing at a compound annual rate of over 16%.

Patients arrive from Bangladesh, the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and increasingly from Europe and North America. They come for cardiovascular surgeries, cancer treatment, organ transplants, fertility procedures, orthopaedic replacements, dental work, and cosmetic surgery. Many have insurance coverage in their home countries but choose to pay out-of-pocket in India because the savings are so substantial. Others come because treatments unavailable or inaccessible at home due to waiting lists, regulatory restrictions, or prohibitive costs are readily available here.

The Indian government has actively supported this sector by simplifying medical visa processes — the e-Medical Visa now covers citizens from 167 countries — and launching the Heal in India campaign to promote the country as a global healthcare destination. A newer Ayush Visa was introduced for patients seeking traditional Indian medicine systems such as Ayurveda, Yoga, and Siddha, recognising a distinct and growing segment of global wellness seekers.

India ranked 10th on the Medical Tourism Index in 2024, which, while indicating significant room for growth.

Conclusion

India's healthcare system defies simple characterisation. For the international patient arriving at Apollo Chennai or Narayana Health Bengaluru, it can genuinely represent the best of both worlds: world-class cardiac surgery, oncology, or orthopaedic care at a fraction of Western prices, delivered by internationally trained specialists in accredited facilities. For the farmer in rural Bihar with a serious illness and no insurance, that same system can feel impossibly distant and unaffordable.

The honest answer to whether India's healthcare is cheaper and better is: yes, for much of what it does at its best, and no, for too many people who still cannot access that best. India has built an extraordinary case for affordable excellence. The task now is to extend that excellence beyond its gleaming private towers and into every corner of a vast and complex nation.

The distinction between cheap and affordable that India's health leaders once made to the world still holds. Affordable excellence is not just a branding exercise; it is a genuine achievement, one that other nations are watching closely, learning from, and in many cases sending their own patients to experience firsthand.

India vs. The World: A Contextual Comparison

- The comparison between Indian healthcare and that of other countries depends heavily on which India you're comparing and which other country.
- **India vs. the United States:** On cost, India wins emphatically. On access and public health infrastructure, neither system covers everyone well — the US has its own catastrophic insurance-related coverage failures — but the US has far greater resources per capita. On elite tertiary care quality, the very best Indian hospitals are genuinely competitive. On average quality across the system, the US holds a clear advantage.
- **India vs. the United Kingdom:** The NHS provides universal coverage that India's public system does not. India's private hospitals often offer shorter waiting times for elective procedures. On cost, India is significantly cheaper.
- **India vs. Thailand or Singapore:** These Southeast Asian nations often score higher on the Medical Tourism Index because of superior consistency, regulatory clarity, and ease of navigation for international patients. India has the talent and infrastructure to compete — and often surpasses them on price — but lacks the seamless patient experience these countries have cultivated.
- **India vs. peer developing economies:** Within the developing world, India's elite healthcare infrastructure is exceptional. The country exports pharmaceutical products, trained doctors, and medical expertise to much of Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East.

The Road Ahead: Building on Strengths, Addressing Gaps

- India's healthcare trajectory is broadly positive. The number of medical colleges rose from around 500 in 2019 to nearly 800 by 2025, steadily increasing the supply of trained doctors. The Indian telemedicine market is expected to reach $5.4 billion by 2025, with digital health platforms bridging some of the access gaps in remote areas.
- Overseas insurance partnerships with Maldives, Oman, Mauritius, and others are integrating India into formal global healthcare financing networks, reducing the uncertainty that has historically made some international patients hesitant.

Raksha Khadse Praises NorthEast United Youth Development

Union Minister Raksha Khadse lauded NorthEast United FC's efforts to nurture emerging football talent

SHILLONG

Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Raksha Khadse visited NorthEast United FC and commended the club's commitment to identifying, developing and nurturing young football talent, particularly from the North East region, which has long been regarded as a stronghold of Indian football.

During her visit, the minister interacted with the club's management, coaching staff and young footballers, gaining insights into the organisation's long-term vision for youth development. The meeting was attended by Mandar Tamhane, Technical Director and Reserve Team Head Coach Naushad Moosa, along with other members of the club's leadership and coaching teams. The club's officials briefed the minister on their comprehensive youth development philosophy and talent identification framework. They outlined how NorthEast United FC is working to establish a sustainable pathway for aspiring footballers, enabling talented youngsters to progress from grassroots levels to professional football.

A key focus of the discussion was the club's extensive scouting programme led by Naushad Moosa. Under this initiative, coaches travelled to various parts of the country to identify promising young players with the potential to excel at higher levels. The scouting process relied on multiple channels, including the club's network of coaches and former players, youth tournaments organised by All India Football Federation, and regular monitoring of footballers representing India in youth national teams.

As part of the talent identification programme, nearly 60 young footballers from different regions were invited to Guwahati for final selection trials. The players chosen from this process are expected to form the foundation of the club's Under-18 and reserve teams, strengthening the long-term development structure established by NorthEast United FC.

Raksha Khadse praised the systematic approach adopted by the club and highlighted the importance of creating strong pathways that connect grassroots football with elite-level competition. She noted that identifying talent at an early age, providing quality coaching and ensuring structured progression opportunities are essential for the future growth of Indian football. According to the minister, initiatives that integrate scouting, athlete development and long-term planning can play a vital role in strengthening the country's football ecosystem and improving the standard of the sport nationwide. She also underscored the significance of the North East region in India's sporting landscape, particularly in football. The region has consistently produced outstanding footballers and remains one of the country's most important talent hubs.

India Lose to Japan in U-18 Asia Cup

India fought back strongly but fell short against hosts Japan in a high-scoring Pool A clash.

KAKAMIGAHARA

The Indian men's team suffered a 2-4 defeat against hosts Japan in their Pool A encounter of the U-18 Asia Cup 2026 on Sunday. Despite staging a spirited comeback to level the scores early in the second half, India were unable to contain the hosts, who capitalised on key opportunities to secure an important victory.

The contest began with both teams displaying attacking intent while battling for control in midfield. For much of the opening quarter, neither side managed to create a decisive breakthrough. However, Japan eventually opened the scoring in the 15th minute through captain Yoshioka Mahiro. The goal came from a cleverly executed penalty corner variation, with Mahiro finishing the move with a diving effort after receiving a return pass from a teammate.

Japan continued to build momentum in the second quarter and doubled their advantage in the 20th minute. Fujiwara Yuma produced an impressive individual effort, finding space down the left side before beating his marker and firing a powerful backhand shot into the top corner of the net.

India responded positively and found a way back into the contest before halftime. After earning their first penalty corner of the match, Ashish Tani Purti successfully converted in the 25th minute with a well-directed strike, reducing the deficit to 2-1 and giving the visitors renewed confidence heading into the break.

The Indian side made an energetic start to the second half and quickly restored parity. In the 32nd minute, captain Ketan Kushwaha took advantage of a loose ball inside the circle after Japan failed to clear following a penalty corner. Showing quick reactions, he chipped the ball over the goalkeeper to bring India level at 2-2.

The equaliser, however, was short-lived. Japan regained the lead just two minutes later through another well-rehearsed penalty corner routine. Yasui Kengo finished off the move in the 34th minute after receiving a precise pass inside the circle.

The hosts extended their advantage further in the 42nd minute when Takahashi Aone found the back of the net with a field goal, giving Japan a comfortable two-goal cushion heading into the final quarter.

India continued to press forward in search of another comeback and launched several attacking moves during the closing stages of the match. However, Japan's defence remained disciplined and organised, successfully denying the visitors any further goals.

The victory earned Japan three valuable points in the tournament, while India were left to reflect on missed opportunities despite showing resilience throughout the encounter.

Holder Gauff joins big-name exodus, Sabalenka solid at French Open

PARIS

Defending champion Coco Gauff was dramatically dethroned at the French Open by Anastasia Potapova, while world number one Aryna Sabalenka cut through the chaos to dismiss Daria Kasatkina and reach the Roland Garros fourth round on Saturday.

After a brutal two days for fancied players at the claycourt Grand Slam during which Jannik Sinner and Novak Djokovic crashed out, Gauff was unable to find her best level and lost 4-6 7-6(1) 6-4 to fall by the wayside.

I don't know, I had chances, Gauff said.

Just trying to capitalise more on these good points that I was hitting and not quite finishing ... that was the difference, she was able to finish points and I wasn't.

It's one thing to lose, but today I competed, I fought my hardest, but I don't think I played the way I wanted to in the crucial moments.

Gauff's premature exit leaves four-times champion Iga Swiatek and Sabalenka as the top contenders to win the Suzanne Lenglen Cup, while Potapova will be viewed as the dark horse having dished out a massive upset. I'm cramping a little bit, but it's OK, it's all good. I don't have any words now, I'm extremely happy, Potapova said in her on-court interview as she clutched her right arm after two hours and 37 minutes of big hitting.

The fight we could show ... Coco's such a champion and I respect her so much. I'm unbelievably proud of myself, that I stayed there, and that I was fighting until the last point.

Sabalenka earlier beat Kasatkina 6-0 7-5 on a sun-drenched Court Suzanne Lenglen for her 100th win as the top-ranked woman, making her only the ninth player to achieve the feat since the inception of the WTA rankings.

She joined Martina Navratilova, Steffi Graf, Chris Evert, Serena Williams, Martina Hingis, Monica Seles, Justine Henin and Swiatek in the honours list.

I've got goosebumps, said Sabalenka, who struggled with dips in form and crippling service issues a few years ago.

It means the world to me and I'm just happy that in the tough moments I stayed tough. I was fighting and never gave up and that is what it has brought me.

Evans wins in Japan to extend championship lead

TOKYO

Toyota's Elfyn Evans won Rally Japan on Sunday to extend his world championship lead over teammate Takamoto Katsuta to 20 points at the halfway point in the season.

The win was the Welshman's second in seven rounds, his third in Japan and also his 50th career championship podium.

Reigning world champion Sebastien Ogier finished second and 12.8 seconds behind with Sami Pajari third and Katsuta fourth as Toyota, competing on home asphalt roads around Aichi and Gifu, locked out the top four places. There's a long way to go in the championship yet. It's too early to really talk about (winning it), but we have to just enjoy this win, said Evans, who now has 151 points, ahead of Katsuta on 131 and Toyota's Oliver Solberg on 102.

Toyota have the top five places in the standings, with Pajari fourth on 96 points and Ogier on 90.

Evans had led since Friday morning's second stage, with Solberg his closest rival until the Swede crashed out on Saturday.

Solberg returned for the final day and salvaged some consolation points by winning the closing Power Stage and also leading the Sunday classification.

Nine-times world champion Ogier, who had lost time on Friday, moved up to second on Saturday but could not close the gap as Evans managed the situation.

Visa Delays Disrupt South Africa WC Plans

CAPE TOWN

South Africa's preparations for the 2026 FIFA World Cup have been thrown into uncertainty after visa-related complications prevented the national team from departing for Mexico as scheduled on Sunday. The delay comes just 11 days before South Africa's opening match of the tournament against co-hosts Mexico, a fixture expected to attract a global television audience.

The squad had been due to travel on a charter flight to their training base in Pachuca, Mexico, where final preparations for the World Cup were set to take place. However, the departure was postponed after several players and officials reportedly had not yet received the necessary travel documentation. The situation has sparked criticism from senior government officials, with South Africa's Sports Minister, Gayton McKenzie, expressing frustration over the handling of the matter. In a strongly worded statement shared on social media, McKenzie described the situation as embarrassing and unfair to the players and coaching staff who had been preparing extensively for the tournament.

The minister said he had requested a detailed report from the South African Football Association (SAFA) and called for accountability regarding the administrative issues that led to the delay. He argued that the incident had damaged the country's image and placed unnecessary pressure on those involved in the wc campaign.

WORLD CUP PRACTICE

Mexico Edge Australia in WC Warm-Up

CALIFORNIA

Co-hosts of the upcoming FIFA World Cup, Mexico continued their preparations with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Australia in an international friendly played before a massive crowd at the Rose Bowl on Saturday. The result provided a valuable confidence boost for the Mexican side while also presenting both coaching staffs with important selection considerations ahead of finalizing their tournament squads.

The match attracted an impressive attendance of 78,479 spectators, with the majority of supporters backing Mexico. The enthusiastic crowd witnessed a disciplined performance from the North American side, who secured victory through a first-half goal from defender Johan Vasquez.

Mexico head coach Javier Aguirre made significant changes to his lineup, introducing nine alterations from the team that defeated Ghana 2-0 in a recent friendly. Despite the extensive rotation, Mexico displayed cohesion and control for much of the contest, suggesting that several fringe players could force their way into the final World Cup squad.

The home side dominated possession and territory during the opening half, consistently putting pressure on the Australian defence. Early opportunities fell to Mexico as they sought to establish control. Midfielder Luis Chavez attempted a long-range effort in the 10th minute, while Australia's experienced goalkeeper Mat Ryan produced an excellent save midway through the half, tipping a close-range header from Alexis Vega over the crossbar.

Mexico's persistence eventually paid off in the 28th minute. Alexis Vega delivered a dangerous corner into the penalty area, where Johan Vasquez rose above his marker and powered a header into the net via the left post. The well-executed set-piece rewarded Mexico for their sustained attacking pressure and gave them a deserved lead.

Australia struggled to create meaningful opportunities during the opening period but came agonizingly close to equalizing shortly before half-time. A defensive mix-up by Mexico presented Mohamed Toure with a golden opportunity after a poor clearance and an ill-timed charge from goalkeeper Raul Rangel left the goal unguarded.

Abhay and Chotrani Advance at British Open

BIRMINGHAM

India enjoyed mixed fortunes at the prestigious British Open squash championship as Abhay Singh and Veer Chotrani advanced to the second round of the PSA Diamond event, while Ramit Tandon and Anahat Singh suffered early exits from the tournament.

World No. 24 Abhay Singh delivered a dominant performance to secure his place in the next stage. The Indian defeated Colombia's Matias Knudsen in straight games, registering an impressive 11-8, 11-5, 11-4 victory. Abhay controlled the match from the outset, displaying consistency and precision to comfortably overcome his opponent.

Veer Chotrani also produced an encouraging performance, defeating Pakistan's world No. 29 Noor Zaman in four games. The contest proved far more competitive than Abhay's encounter, with Chotrani eventually emerging victorious by scores of 11-8, 12-14, 11-6, 11-7. After losing a closely fought second game, the Indian regained momentum and dominated the latter stages of the match to secure progression.

The challenge will become significantly tougher in the second round. Chotrani is set to face fifth-seeded Welsh star Joel Makin, while Abhay will take on seventh-seeded Egyptian player Mohamad Zakaria in what promises to be a stern test for the Indian competitors.

In contrast, Ramit Tandon's campaign came to an unfortunate end. The experienced Indian was forced to retire from his match against French player Auguste Dussourd. At the time of his withdrawal, the match score stood at 14-12, 4-7, bringing an abrupt conclusion to his participation in the tournament.

Freya Kemp Stars as England Level Series Comfortably

LONDON

England all-rounder Freya Kemp delivered a match-winning performance as England defeated India by 26 runs in the second Twenty20 International in Bristol, drawing widespread praise ahead of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026. Kemp played a decisive role with both bat and ball, helping her side secure an important victory in the closely contested series.

Coming to the crease during the closing stages of England's innings, Kemp produced a remarkable unbeaten knock of 39 runs from just 13 deliveries. Her aggressive batting transformed England's total, particularly in the final over when she launched a fierce assault on the Indian bowling attack. The over yielded 24 runs, significantly boosting England's score and placing additional pressure on the visitors during their chase.

The 21-year-old's contribution did not end with the bat. She followed up her explosive innings with a crucial spell of bowling, dismissing two of India's most dangerous batters, Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues. Those key breakthroughs halted India's momentum and played a major role in restricting the visitors, who eventually finished 26 runs short of the target.

Freya Kemp's brilliant all-round display guided England to a convincing victory over India in Bristol.

Reflecting on her performance, Kemp expressed satisfaction with England's ability to finish strongly in the final overs. She noted that the team had focused extensively on improving its execution during the closing stages of innings and was pleased to have contributed effectively alongside teammate Dani Gibson.

Kemp also acknowledged that although her first over with the ball proved expensive, she was delighted to recover and claim two significant wickets.

The performance marks an encouraging chapter in Kemp's return to international cricket after an injury-plagued period.

Earlier this month, England's match against New Zealand was her first international appearance since the 2025 Ashes tour of Australia. During her rehabilitation, she concentrated heavily on enhancing her batting skills while she was unable to bowl, a decision that appears to be yielding impressive results.

Kemp also praised England head coach Charlotte Edwards for her unwavering support throughout her recovery journey.

She credited Edwards for consistently backing her, even during difficult periods, and said that confidence had played a crucial role in helping her regain form.

With England set to begin their ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 campaign against Sri Lanka on June 12, Kemp's return to peak form provides a timely boost and strengthens the team's prospects heading into the global tournament.

ICC SET TO REVIVE GLOBAL T20 QUALIFIERS

NEW DELHI

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is set to bring back the global qualification pathway for Associate member nations seeking entry into future Men's T20 World Cups. The proposal emerged as one of the key outcomes of a meeting involving ICC members held in Ahmedabad, signaling a significant shift in the governing body's approach to expanding opportunities for emerging cricket nations.

According to discussions held during the meeting, the ICC is considering reinstating a centralized Global Qualifier tournament, a competition that previously served as the final stage of qualification for Associate teams aiming to secure places at the T20 World Cup. The move is expected to receive formal approval when the ICC Board reconvenes in Ahmedabad on Sunday, ahead of the Indian Premier League final.While it remains unclear whether the decision will require final ratification during the ICC Annual Conference scheduled to take place in Edinburgh in July, indications suggest that the restoration of the Global Qualifier has strong backing among member nations.

The proposal comes amid growing recognition of the increasing popularity and competitiveness of Associate cricket. ICC officials have reportedly taken note of the substantial rise in audience engagement involving Associate nations. In previous years, matches featuring Associate teams attracted viewership figures significantly lower than contests involving Full Member countries. However, recent audience data indicates that the gap has narrowed considerably, demonstrating increased global interest in cricket beyond the traditional powerhouses.The renewed attention toward Associate cricket has encouraged the ICC to revisit qualification structures that provide smaller nations with a clearer and more competitive route to major international tournaments. Supporters of the proposal believe that a centralized qualifying event would enhance competition, improve visibility for emerging teams, and create additional opportunities for developing cricket nations to compete on the global stage.

ICC plans to restore global qualification tournaments for Associate nations ahead of future T20 World Cups.

The Global Qualifier was an established part of the qualification process before being discontinued after the 2019 edition held in the United Arab Emirates.

That tournament was won by the Netherlands, which successfully secured qualification for the 2020 Men's T20 World Cup.

However, the global event itself was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was eventually conducted in 2021.

If formally approved, the return of the Global Qualifier would mark an important development for Associate cricket, providing nations outside the Full Member structure with a renewed pathway to the sport's premier T20 competition. The move is also expected to strengthen the ICC's broader objective of expanding cricket's global reach and competitiveness.

Thailand, Malaysia and China Qualify for Asian Games

NAGOYA

Thailand, Malaysia and China have secured their places in the women's cricket tournament at the 2026 Asian Games following the conclusion of the qualification competition held in Kuala Lumpur. The prestigious multi-sport event will take place in Japan's Aichi Prefecture and Nagoya during September and October next year.

Thailand and Malaysia earned automatic qualification by reaching the final of the qualifying tournament, while China claimed the remaining available spot after defeating Nepal in the third-place playoff. The successful qualification campaign marks a significant achievement for all three nations as they prepare to compete against some of Asia's strongest cricket teams.

Thailand emerged as the dominant side throughout the tournament. They finished at the top of Group A after registering victories over both Malaysia and Hong Kong. Malaysia recovered from their defeat against Thailand by overcoming Hong Kong to advance to the semi-finals. In Group B, Nepal topped the standings while China secured second place to complete the semi-final lineup.

The knockout stage produced impressive performances from the eventual qualifiers. Thailand delivered a commanding display against China in the semi-final, bowling their opponents out for just 53 runs and securing an emphatic 83-run victory. Malaysia, meanwhile, edged past Nepal in a closely contested encounter, successfully chasing a target of 127 with two wickets remaining and eight balls to spare.

With the two finalists already assured of qualification, attention shifted to the third-place playoff, where China faced Nepal. Rain affected the contest, but China held their nerve and registered a five-wicket victory under the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method, securing the final qualification berth.

The tournament concluded with Thailand once again demonstrating their superiority. In the final, they dismantled Malaysia's batting lineup, dismissing them for only 54 runs before comfortably reaching the target with nine wickets in hand.

Thailand enter the Asian Games as one of the strongest Associate teams in women's cricket.

The nation previously qualified for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in Australia in 2020 after progressing through the global qualification pathway. According to current ICC Women's T20 International rankings, Thailand are placed 12th, while Malaysia occupy 28th position and China are ranked 42nd.

The women's cricket competition at the Asian Games will feature eight teams in the T20 format.

Alongside the three qualifiers and host nation Japan, automatic qualification has been granted to the four Full Member nations from the region: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, qualification for the men's cricket competition remains ongoing.

Host nation Japan and the five regional Full Members—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka—have already secured their places, with four additional teams set to emerge from the ongoing qualifying tournament.

De Caires Leads Middlesex to First Blast Victory

LONDON

Josh De Caires produced a career-defining performance to guide Middlesex to their first victory of the 2026 Vitality Blast season, defeating Sussex by 31 runs in an entertaining contest at Hove. The young batter struck his maiden T20 half-century and played a pivotal role with both bat and ball as Middlesex finally opened their account after two consecutive defeats.

De Caires, the son of former England captain Michael Atherton, anchored Middlesex's innings with a superb unbeaten 80. His innings came from a controlled yet aggressive approach, featuring seven boundaries and five towering sixes. The right-hander's knock provided the foundation for Middlesex's imposing total of 213 for 4, a score that ultimately proved beyond Sussex's reach.

A crucial element of the innings was De Caires' partnership with Max Holden. The pair combined for a valuable 95-run stand for the second wicket, stabilizing the innings before accelerating during the middle and latter stages. Their partnership ensured Middlesex maintained momentum throughout the innings and set a challenging target for the home side.

Sussex began their chase positively, with Tom Clark providing an explosive start. His quickfire 31 runs helped the hosts make significant progress during the powerplay and briefly raised hopes of a successful pursuit.

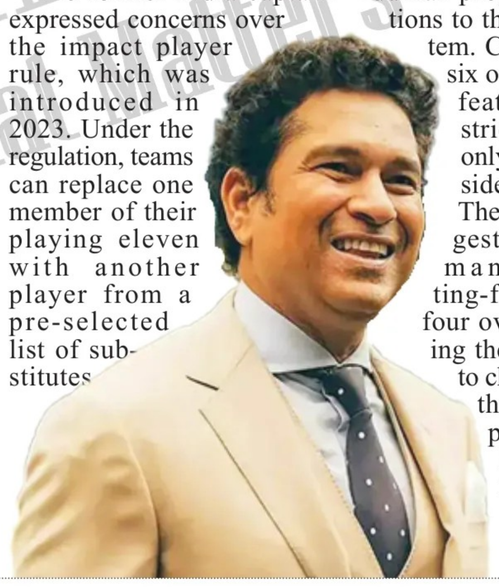
Sachin Tendulkar has proposed major rule changes to create a fairer contest between batters and bowlers.

Tendulkar Calls for IPL Rules to Restore Balance

MUMBAI

Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar has called for significant changes to the Indian Premier League (IPL) playing conditions, arguing that the current rules have tilted the balance too heavily in favor of batters. Speaking at the ESPNcricinfo Awards ceremony in Ahmedabad on the eve of the IPL 2026 final, Tendulkar suggested scrapping the impact player rule and introducing new measures aimed at giving bowlers a greater influence on matches.

The former India captain expressed concerns over the impact player rule, which was introduced in 2023. Under the regulation, teams can replace one member of their playing eleven with another player from a pre-selected list of substitutes during the course of a match. According to Tendulkar, the rule has contributed to increasingly high scores and has made life considerably more difficult for bowlers.



He argued that in a format where teams already have 20 overs to maximize their scoring opportunities, the addition of an extra specialist batter further strengthens batting line-ups and creates an imbalance. Tendulkar believes removing the rule would help restore a more even contest between bat and ball.

Beyond eliminating the impact player provision, Tendulkar proposed modifications to the powerplay system. Currently, the first six overs of an innings feature fielding restrictions that allow only two fielders outside the inner circle. The cricket icon suggested reducing the mandatory batting-friendly phase to four overs while allowing the fielding captain to choose when to use the remaining two powerplay overs later in the innings.

Under his proposal, those two overs could be taken consecutively at any stage of the match, providing captains with greater tactical flexibility. He believes such a change would enable fielding sides to exert more control over the flow of the game and counter aggressive batting strategies more effectively.

Tendulkar also advocated increasing the maximum number of overs one bowler can deliver in a T20 innings from four to five. He argued that allowing the best bowlers an additional over would enhance the quality of competition and provide teams with another strategic option.

The cricket great questioned why elite batters are often able to remain at the crease for an entire innings while bowlers are restricted to only four overs. In his view, permitting a leading bowler to bowl five overs would help showcase top bowling talent and contribute to a more balanced spectacle.

Tendulkar's comments come amid ongoing debates about rising scoring rates in T20 cricket and whether rule changes are needed to preserve the competitive equilibrium between batters and bowlers in the world's most popular franchise league.

Ashwin praises Kohli ahead of IPL Final

AHMEDABAD

As Royal Challengers Bengaluru prepare for the IPL 2026 final against the Gujarat Titans, former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin believes Virat Kohli's ability to read and counter opposition plans could once again prove crucial in the title clash.

Kohli has been a key figure in RCB's run to a second successive final, providing stability at the top of the order while allowing the team's aggressive middle order to play with freedom. Ahead of Sunday's showdown in Ahmedabad, Ashwin praised the veteran batter's game awareness, particularly in his ongoing battle with Gujarat's bowling attack led by Kagiso Rabada.

Virat is very smart, actually, in terms of understanding what's coming his way," Ashwin told Jio Hotstar.

"In the last game in Dharamshala, he pulled one off Kagiso Rabada, and it's almost like he's telling himself, the world, and Rabada, 'You know what, I can pull that. You got me out in Ahmedabad, but I'm showing you that I've got that in my closet," he added.

According to Ashwin, Gujarat's primary strategy against Kohli has been to attack him with wide deliveries and force him into uncomfortable scoring areas.

"What GT have done to Virat is bowl really wide. They're asking his closed bottom hand to open up and go square of the pitch. He's gotten out nicking those balls over the last two years," he said.

"Virat countered that well in Ahmedabad.

They went back to that plan in Dharamshala, and he still handled it well," he added.

Ashwin believes Kohli's role remains central to RCB's batting strategy, particularly because his presence at the crease allows other batters to continue playing the fearless brand of cricket that has defined the defending champions' campaign.

"Everybody in the RCB team would want Virat anchored in there for as long as he can, because that enables them to take the high-risk options they have played all through the season," he said.

Ashwin also highlighted RCB captain Rajat Patidar's strength against spin bowling, describing him as one of the most destructive spin-hitters in the competition and suggesting Gujarat may need to rely more on pace than spin if they are to contain him in the final.

Jharkhand T20 League auction: Robin Minz, Virat Singh amongt top buys

JAMSHEDPUR

The six franchises of the Jharkhand T20 League, Ranchi Titans, Jamshedpur Steelers, Chota Nagpur Royals, Koylanchal Super Kings, Dhanbad Diamonds and Santhal Strikers battled it out on the bidding table to finalise their rosters, blending established international stars with the state's most promising emerging talent.

The picks of the auction for the inaugural season of the were Robin Minz (Koylanchal Super Kings), Virat Singh (Chota Nagpur Royals), Md Kounain Quraishi (Jamshedpur Steelers), Sushant Mishra (Dhanbad Diamonds), Ishan Kishan (Santhal Strikers) and Shikhar Mohan (Ranchi Titans) with franchises spending their Rs 50 lakh purse cap aggressively to build their squads ahead of the league.

Under the aegis of Jharkhand State Cricket Association, the Jharkhand T20 League will be conducted from June 10.

"This is an exciting new chapter in Jharkhand's cricketing journey. The league is a landmark initiative by the Jharkhand State Cricket Association (JSCA) to further promote and develop the game at a professional level within our region," said Ajay Nath Shah Deo, President, Jharkhand State Cricket Association.

"Jharkhand T20 League will provide a robust platform for young and emerging cricketers to showcase their skills alongside experienced players.

The league will bring high-quality, competitive T20 cricket to fans across the nation," said Sanjay Pandey, vice president, JSCA

"This league will open up a lot of avenues for young cricketing talent from Jharkhand and could potentially unearth India's next big cricketing superstar," said Saurabh Tiwary, Secretary, JSCA.

"JSCA's main objective is the development of cricket in all formats and this is a right step forward in that direction.

It's all set to be an exciting two weeks of competitive action," said Shahbaz Nadeem, Joint Secretary, JSCA.

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